Original manuscript
of
"The Trumpet-major"
by
Thomas Hardy
1880

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PART I.

G.W.
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The Trumpet-major

by Thomas Hardy

Author of "Far from the madding Crowd" &c.

1878

Chapter I.

What was seen from the window overlooking the down.

In the days of high-waisted & muslin-gowned women, when the vast amount of soldiering going on in the country was a cause of much trembling to the sex, there lived in a village near the Wessex coast two ladies of good report, though unfortunately of limited means. The elder was a Mrs Martha Garland, a landscape-painter's widow, & the other was her only daughter Anne.

Anne was fair, very fair, in a poet's sense of the word; but in complexion she was of that particular tint between blonde & brunette which is inconveniently left without a name. Her eyes were honest & inquiring, her mouth cleanly cut & yet not classical, the middle point of her upper lip scarcely descending so far as it should have done by rights, so that at the merest pleasant thought, not to mention a smile, portions of two or three white teeth were uncovered whether she would or not. Some people said that this was very attractive. She was graceful & slender, & though but little above five feet in height could draw herself up to look tall. In her manner, in her comings & goings, in her "I'll do this" or "I'll do that" she combined dignity with sweetness as no other girl could do; and any impressionable stranger youths who passed by

were led to yearn for a windfall of speech from her & to see at the same time that they would not get it. In short beneath all that was charming & simple in this young woman there lurked a real firmness, unperceived at first, but none the less there, as the speck of ~~dust~~ colour lurks unperceived in ~~the~~ a milkwhite parsley flower.

She wore a white handkerchief to cover her white neck, & a cap on her head with a pink ribbon round it, tied in a bow at the front. She had a great variety of these cap-ribbons, the young men being fond of sending them to her as presents until they fell definitely in love with a special sweetheart elsewhere, when they left off doing so. Between the border of her cap & her forehead were ranged a row of round brown curls, like swallows' nests under eaves.

She lived with her widowed mother in portion of an ancient building formerly a manor house, but now a mill, which, being too large for his own requirements the miller had found it convenient to divide & appropriate in part to these highly respectable tenants. In this dwelling Mrs Garland & Anne's ears were soothed morning noon & night by the music of the mill. The wheels & cogs of which, being of wood, produced notes that might have borne in their minds a remote resemblance to the tones of the stopped diapason, the organ-pipes of that stop being of the same material. Occasionally, when the miller was bolting, there was added to these continuous sounds the cheerful clicking of the hopper, which did not deprive them of rest except when it was kept going all night; & over & above all this they had the pleasure of knowing that there crept in through every crevice, door, & window of their dwelling, however tightly closed, a subtle mist of superfine flour from the grinding room, quite invisible, but making its presence known in the course of time by giving a pallid & ghostly look to the best furniture. The miller frequently apolo-

gised to his tenants for the intrusion of this insidious dry fog; but the widow was of a friendly & thankful nature, ~~otherwise kindly~~ kind, & she said that she did not mind it at all, being as it was not nasty dirt, but the blessed staff of life.

By good humour of this sort & in other ways, Mrs Garland acknowledged her friendship for her neighbour, with whom Anne & herself associated to an extent which she never anticipated when they first removed thither after her husband's death, tempted by the lowness of the rents. Those who have lived in remote places from a larger house at the other end of the village where there is what is called no society will comprehend the gradual levelling of distinctions that went on in this case at some sacrifice of gentility on the part of one household. The widow was sometimes ~~grieved~~ sorry to find with what readiness Anne caught up some dialect word or accent from the miller & his friends; but he was so good & true-hearted a man, & she so easy-minded, unambitious a woman, that she would not make life a solitude for superfine reasons. More than all, she had good ground for thinking that the miller secretly admired her, & this added a piquancy to the situation.

[Space]

On a fine summer morning, when the leaves were warm under the sun, & the more industrious bees abroad, diving into every blue & red cup that could possibly be considered a flower, Anne was sitting at the back window of her mother's portion of the house, measuring out lengths of worsted for a fringed rug that she was making, which lay about three-quarters finished beside her. The work, though chromatically brilliant, was tedious: a hearth-rug was a thing which nobody worked at from morning to night; it was taken up & put down; it was in the chair, on the floor, across the handrail, under

the bed, kicked here, kicked there, rolled away in the closet, brought out again, & so on, more capriciously perhaps than any other home-made article. Nobody was expected to finish a rug within a calculable period, & the wools of the beginning became faded & historical before the end was reached. A sense of this inherent nature of worsted work rather than idleness led Anne to look rather frequently from the open casement.

Immediately before her was the large smooth mill-pond, overfull, & intruding into the hedge & into the road. ~~The spots of froth & floating leaves were slowly borne past her as the~~ The water, with its floating leaves & spots of froth, was stealing away, under the dark arch, like Time, to tumble over the great slimy wheel within. On the other side of the mill-pond was an open place called the Cross, because it was three-quarters of one, ~~the point of intersection of the~~; two lanes & a cattle-drive meeting here. It was the general rendezvous & arena of the surrounding village. Behind this a steep slope rose high into the sky, merging in a wide & open down, now littered with sheep newly shorn. The upland by its height completely sheltered the mill & village from north winds, making summers of springs, reducing winters to autumn temperatures, & permitting myrtles to flourish in the open air.

The heaviness of noon pervaded the scene, & under its influence the sheep had ceased to feed. Nobody was standing at the village cross, the few inhab-

itants being indoors at their dinner. No human being was on the Down, & no human eye or interest but Anne's seemed to be concerned with it. The bees still worked on, & the butterflies did not rest from roving, their smallness seeming to shield them from the stagnating effect that this turning moment of day had on larger creatures. Otherwise all was still.

The girl glanced at the down & the sheep for no particular reason; simply that the steep margin of turf & daisies, rising above the roofs, chimneys, espaliers, & church tower of the hamlet around her, bounded the view from her position, & it was necessary to look somewhere when she raised her head. While thus engaged in working & stopping her attention was attracted by the sudden rising & running away of the sheep squatted on the down; & there succeeded sounds of a heavy tramping over the hard sod which the sheep had quitted, the tramp being accompanied by a metallic clanking. Turning her eyes further she beheld two cavalry soldiers on bulky grey chargers, armed & accoutred throughout, ascending the down at a point to the left where the incline was comparatively easy. The burnished chains, buckles, & plates of their trappings shone like little flames, & the blue red & white about them was unsubdued by weather or wear.

The two troopers rode proudly on, as if nothing less than crowns & empires ever concerned their magnificent minds. They reached that part of the Down which lay just in front of her, where they came to a halt. In another minute there appeared behind these a group containing some half-dozen more of the same sort. These came on, halted, & dismounted likewise.

Two of the soldiers then walked some distance onward together, when one stood still, the other advancing further, & stretching a white line or tape between them. Two other more of the men marched to another outlying point, where they made marks in the ground. Thus they walked about & took distances, obviously according to some preconcerted scheme.

At the end of this systematic proceeding one solitary trooper – a commissioned officer if his uniform could be judged rightly at that distance – rode up the down, went over the ground, looked at what the others had done, & seemed to think that it was good. And then the girl heard yet louder tramps & clankings, & she beheld rising from where the others had risen a whole column of cavalry in marching order. At a distance behind these came a cloud of dust enveloping more & more troops, their arms & accoutrements reflecting the sun through the haze in faint flashes, stars, & streaks of light. The whole body approached slowly towards the plateau at the top of the down.

Anne threw down her work, & letting her eyes remain on the nearing masses of cavalry, the worsteds getting entangled as they would, said "Mother, mother; come here! Here's such a fine sight – what does it mean? What can they be going to do up there?"

The mother invoked ran upstairs, entered the room, & came forward to the window. She was a woman with a sanguine mouth & eye, imperious manner, & pleasant general appearance; a little more tarnished as to surface, but not much worse in contour than the girl herself.

Widow Garland's thoughts were those of the period. "Can it be the French? she said, arranging herself for the extremest form of consternation. Could that arch-enemy of mankind have landed at last?" It should be stated that at this time there were two arch-enemies of mankind, Satan as usual, & Buonaparte, who had sprung up & eclipsed his elder rival altogether. Mrs Garland alluded to the junior gentleman.

"It cannot be he", said Anne. "Ah, there's Simon Burden – the man who watches at the beacon – he'll know!"

She waved her hand to an aged form of the same colour as the road, who had just appeared beyond the mill-pond, & who though active was bowed to that degree which almost reproaches a feeling observer for standing upright. The

arrival of the soldiery had drawn him out from his drop of drink at the "Three Mariners" as it had attracted Anne. At her call he crossed the mill bridge, & came towards the window that framed in the two women.

Anne inquired of him what it all meant, but Simon Burden, without answering continued to move on ~~staring~~ with parted gums, staring at the cavalcade on his own private account with a concern that people often show about temporal phenomena when such matters can affect them but a short time longer. "You'll walk into the mill-pond!" said Anne. "What are they doing? You were a soldier many years ago, & ought to know."

"Don't ask me, ~~Mistress~~ Miss'ess Anne," said the military relic, depositing his body against the wall one limb at a time. "I were only in the foot, ye know, & never had a clear understanding of horses. Ay, I be a old man, & of no judgment now." Some additional pressure however, caused him to search further in his worm-eaten magazine of ideas, & he found that he did know in a ~~dimmed~~ dim irresponsible way. "The soldiers must have come here to camp: those men they had been first were the markers; they had come on before the rest to measure out the ground. He who had accompanied them was the quarter-master." "And so you see they have got all the lines marked out by the time the regiment have come up," he ebbed. "And then they will — well-a-deary! who'd ha' supposed that Overcombe would see such a day as this!"

"And then they will —"

"Then... ah 'tis gone from me again!" said Simon. "Oh, & then they will raise their tents, you know, & picket their horses — that was it; so it was."

By this time the column of horse had ascended into full view, & they formed a lively spectacle as they rode along the high ground in

marching order, backed by the pale blue sky, & lit by the southerly sun. Their uniform was bright & attractive; they wore white buckskin pantaloons, three-quarter boots, scarlet shakos set off with lace, mustachios waxed to a needle point; & above all those richly ornamented blue jackets mantled with the historic pelisse – that fascination to women, & encumbrance to the wearers themselves.

"Tis the York Hussars," said Simon Burden, brightening like a dying ember fanned. "Foreigners to a man, & enrolled long since my time. But as good hearty comrades, they say, as you'll find in the king's service.

"There be more & different ones," said Mrs Garland.

Other troops had, during the last few minutes been ascending the down at a remoter point, & now drew near. There were of different weight & build from the others; lighter men, in helmet hats with white plumes.

"I don't know which I like best, said Anne. "There I think, after all."

Simon, who had been looking hard at the latter, now said that they were the 7— th dragoons. [redacted] – "All Englishmen they," said the old man. "They lay at Weymouth Barracks a few years ago."

"They did – I remember it," said Mrs Garland.

"And lots of the chaps about here listed at the time", said Simon, "I can call to mind that [redacted] there was – [redacted] – ah, 'tis gone from me again! However, all that's of little account now."

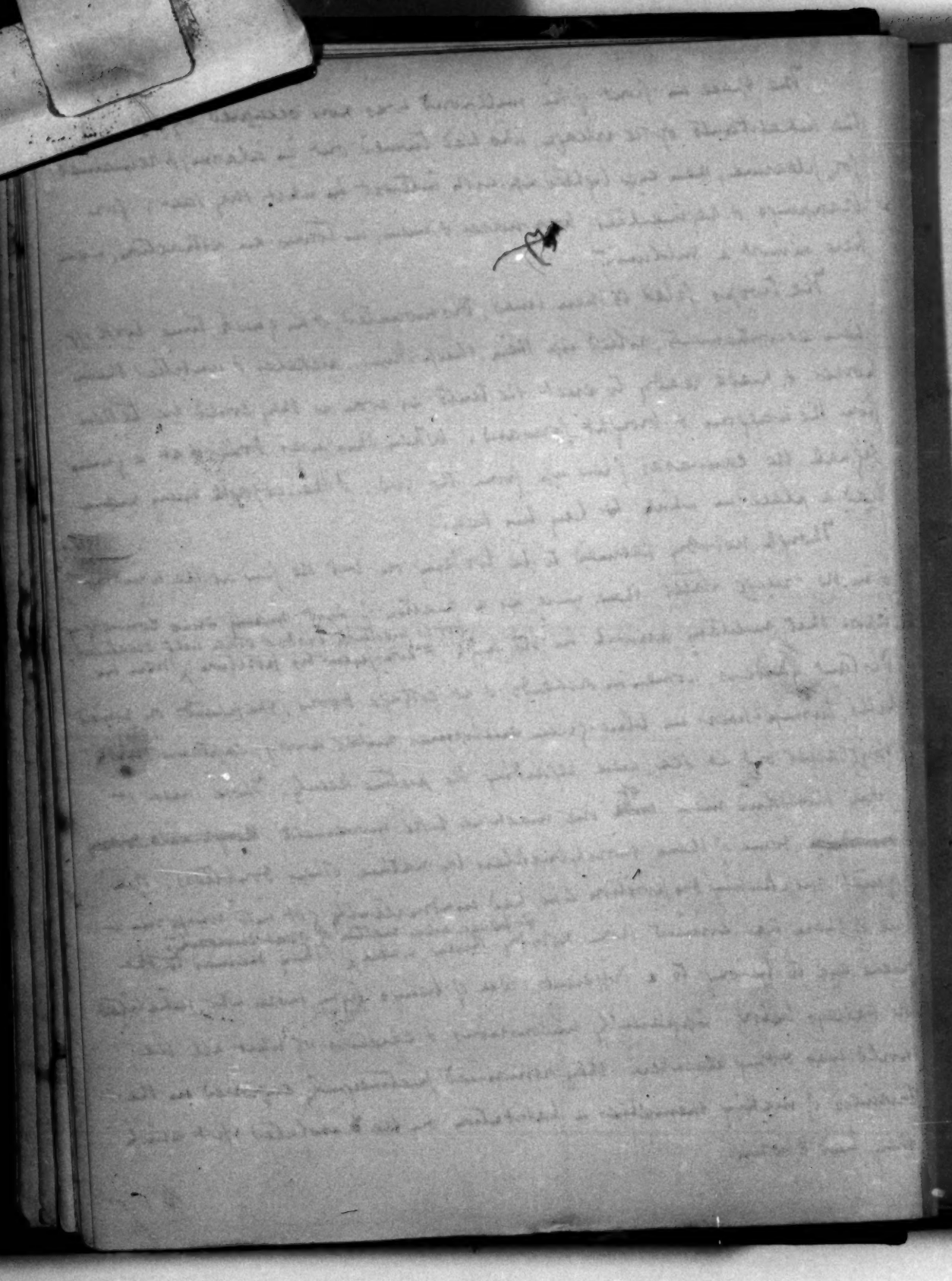
The dragoons passed in front of the lookers-on as the others had done, & their gay plumes, which had hung lazily during the ascent, swung to northward as they reached the top, showing that on the summit a fresh breeze blew.

"But look across there!" said Anne. There had entered upon the down from another direction several battalions of foot, in white kerseymere breeches, & cloth gaiters. They seemed to be weary from a long march, the original black of their gaiters & boots being whitey-brown with dust. Presently came regimental waggons, & the private canteen carts which followed at the end of a convoy.

The space in front of the millpond was now occupied by nearly all the inhabitants of the village, who had turned out in alarm, & remained for pleasure, their eyes lighted up with interest in what they saw; for trappings & regimentals, war-horses & men, in towns an attraction, were here almost a sublimity.

The troops filed to their lines, dismounted, & in quick time took off their accoutrements, rolled up their sheepskins, picketed & untitled their horses, & made ready to erect the tents as soon as they could be taken from the waggons & brought forward. When this was done, & at a given signal the canvasses flew up from the sod; & thenceforth every man had a place in which to lay his head.

Though nobody seemed to be looking on but the few at the window & in the village street there were as a matter of fact many eyes conveying upon that military arrival in its bright & conspicuous position, ~~Not to mention birds & other wild creatures,~~ men in distant gardens, women in orchards & at cottage doors, shepherds on remote hills, turnip-hoers in blue-green enclosures miles away, captains with spyglasses out at sea, were regarding the picture keenly. Those three or four thousand men of one machine like movement, ~~[illegible]~~ some of them swashbucklers by nature, others, doubtless, of a quiet shopkeeping disposition who had inadvertently got into uniform — all of them had arrived from nobody knew where, & their charge were matter of great eminent. They seemed to the mere eye to belong to a different order of beings from those who inhabited the valleys below. Apparently unconscious & careless of what all the world was doing elsewhere they remained picturesquely engrossed in the business of making themselves a habitation on the isolated spot which they had chosen.



Mrs Garland was of a pensive & sanguine turn of mind, a woman soon set up & soon set down, & the coming of the regiments ~~had~~ quite excited her. She thought there was reason for putting on her best cap, thought that perhaps there was not: that she would hurry on the dinner & go out in the afternoon: then that she would, after all, do nothing unusual, nor show any silly excitements whatever, since they were unbecoming in a mother & a widow. Thus circumscribing her intentions till she was toned down to an ordinary person of forty Mrs Garland accompanied her daughter downstairs to dine, saying, "~~Splendammer~~ Presently we will call on Miller Loveday, & hear what he thinks of it all."

Chapter II.

In which somebody knocks & comes in.

Miller Loveday was the representative of an ancient family of corn-grinders whose history is lost in the mists of antiquity. His ancestral line was contemporaneous with that of De Ros, Howard, & de La Zouche; but owing to some trifling deficiency in the possessions of the house of Loveday the individual names & intermarriages of its members were not preserved during the middle ages, & thus their private lines in any given century were uncertain. ~~Hence how dependent~~ But it was known that the family had formed matrimonial alliances with farmers not so very small, & once with a gentleman-tanner, who had for many years punctured after their death the horses of the most aristocratic persons in the county — fiery steeds that earlier in their career had been valued at many hundred guineas. It was also ascertained that his great-grandparents had been eight in number, & his great-great-grandparents sixteen, every one of whom reached by years of discretion: at every stage backwards his sires & gammers thus doubled & doubled till they became a vast body of Gothic ladies & gentlemen of the rank known as ceorls or villeins, full of importance to the country at large, & ramifying throughout the unwritten history of England. His immediate father

had greatly improved the value of their residence by building a new chimney and setting up an additional pair of mill stones.

Overcombe Mill presented at one end the appearance of a hard-worked house shipping into the river, & at the other of an idle genteel place, half-cloaked with creepers, (at this time of the year, & having no visible connection with flour). It had hips instead of gables, giving it a round-shouldered look, four chimneys with no smoke coming out of them, two zigzag cracks in the wall, several open windows, with a looking-glass here & there inside showing its warped back to the passer by, snowy dimity curtains waving in the draught, two mill doors, one above the other, the upper enabling a person to step out upon nothing at a height of ten feet from the ground; a gaping arch vomiting the river, & a lean long-nosed fellow looking out from the mill doorway, who was the hired grinder, except when a bulging fifteen-stone man occupied the same place, namely, the miller himself.

Behind the mill door, & invisible to the mere wayfarer who did not visit the family, were chalked addition & subtraction sums, many of them originally done wrong, & the figures half-rubbed out & corrected, noughts being turned into nines & ones into twos. There were the miller's private calculations. There were also chalked in the same place rows & rows of strokes like open palings, representing the calculations of the grinder, who in his youthful cyphering studies had not gone so far as Arabic figures.

In the court in front were two worn-out mill-stones, made useful again by being let in level with the ground. Here people stood to smoke & consider things in muddy weather; & cats slept, on the clean surfaces when it was hot. In the large stubbard-tree at the corner of the garden was erected a pole of larch fir, which the miller had bought with others at a sale of small timber in Lammas Wood one Christmas week. It rose from the upper boughs of the tree to about the height

of a fisherman's mast, & on the top was a vane in the form of a sailor with his arm stretched out. When the sun shone upon this figure it could been seen that the greater part of his countenance was gone, & the paint washed from his body so far as to reveal that he had been a soldier in red before he became a sailor in blue. The image had, in fact, been John, one of our coming characters, & was then turned into Robert, another of them. This revolving piece of statuary could not, however, be relied on as a truthful vane, owing to the neighbouring hill, which formed variable currents in the wind.

The leafy & quieter wing of the mill-house was the part occupied by Mrs Garland & her daughter, who made up in summer-time for the narrowness of their quarters by overflowing considerably into the garden on stools & chairs. The parlour or dining room had a stone floor, a fact which the widow sought to disguise by double carpeting, lest the standing of Anne & herself & her daughter should be lowered in the public eye by the use of the room in its primitive state. Here now the mid-day meal went lightly & mincingly on, as it does where there is no greedy carnivorous man to keep the dishes about, & was hanging on the close when somebody

[illegible] entered the passage as far as the chink of the parlour door, & tapped. This proceeding was probably adopted to kindly avoid giving trouble to Susan the neighbour's pink daughter, who helped at Mrs. Garlands in the mornings, but was at that moment particularly occupied in standing on the water-butt & gazing at the soldiers, with an inhaling position of the jawbone & circular eyes.

There was a fluttering in the little dining-room: the sensitiveness of habitual solitude makes hearts beat for preternaturally small reasons; & a guessing as to who the visitor might be was hurriedly made. It was some military gentleman from the camp perhaps? No, that was impossible. It was the parson? No, he would not come at dinner time. It was the well-informed man who travelled with drapery & the best Birmingham earrings? not at all; his time was not till Thursday at three. Before they could think further the visitor moved forward another step & the diners got a glimpse of him through the same friendly chink that had afforded him a view of the Garlands' dinner-table.

"O, it is only [illegible] Loveday."

This approximation to nobody was the miller above mentioned, a hale man of fifty-five or sixty — hale all through, as many were in those days, & not merely veneered with pimples by exhilarating victuals & drinks, though the latter were not at all despised by him. His face was indeed rather pale than otherwise, for he had just come from the mill. It was capable of immense changes of expression; mobility was its essence, a roll of flesh forming a buttress to his nose on each side, & a deep ravine lying between his lower lip & the tumulus represented by his chin. These fleshy lumps moved stealthily, as if of their own accord, whenever his fancy was tickled.

His eyes having lighted on the table cloth, plates, & viands, he found himself in a position which had a sensible awkwardness for a modest man who always

liked to enter only at seasonable times the presence of a girl of such pleasantly soft ways as Anne Garland – who could make apples seem like peaches, & throw over her shillings the glamour of guineas when she paid him for ~~his~~ flour. ~~But to go on with the~~ ~~accident to the mill to go on with~~ ~~this is the first time~~.

"Dinner is over, neighbour Loveday; please come in," said the widow, seeing his case, & wondering why he called at that unusual hour ~~& rising to receive him~~. The miller said something about coming in presently; but Anne, who liked his news, pressed him to stay, with a tender motion of her lip, as it played on the verge of a solicitous smile without quite lapsing into one – her habitual manner when speaking.

Loveday took off his low-crowned hat & advanced as if he had thought that this might be the end of it. He had not come about pigs or fowls this time, he said. Seeing their door open as he passed he determined to step in & tell them some news. "You have been looking out, like the rest o'us, no doubt, Mrs. Garland, at the manœuvres of soldiers that have come upon the down?"

She said pleasantly that they had both been doing so.

"Well," said Loveday, "one of the horse regiments is the 7th the Dragoons – my son John's regiment, you know."

The announcement, though it interested them, did not create such an effect as the father of John had seemed to anticipate; but Anne, who liked to say pleasant things replied "The Dragoons looked nicer than the Foot or the German cavalry either."

"They are a handsome body of men", said the miller in a disinterested voice. "Faith, I did'nt know they were coming – though it may be in the newspaper all the time. But old Derriman keeps on so long that one never knows things till they be in everybody's mouth."

This Derriman was a squireen living near, who was chiefly distinguished in the present warlike time by having a nephew in the yeomanry. "We were told that the yeomanry went along the turnpike road yesterday," said Anne, following out this track of thought. "And they say that they were a pretty sight, & quite soldierly."

"Ah, well – they be not regulars," said miller Loveday keeping back [illegible] criticism as unasked for. But inflamed by the arrival of the dragoons which had been the exciting cause of his call, his mind would not go to the yeomanry. "John has not been home these five years," he said.

"And what rank does he hold now?" said the widow.

He's trumpet-major, ma'am. And a good musician." The miller, who was a good father, went on to explain that John had seen some service too. He had enlisted when the regiment was lying at Weymouth, more than eleven years before; which put his father out of temper with him, as he had wished him to follow on at the mill. But as he had enlisted seriously, & without a drop of drink in him, & as he had often said that he would be a soldier, the miller had thought that he would let Jack take his chance in the profession of his choice.

Loveday had two sons, & the second was now brought into the conversation by a remark of Anne's that neither of them seemed to care for the miller's business.

"No," said Loveday in a less buoyant tone: "Robert, you see, must needs go to sea." Loveday was more hopeful, however, in expressing his belief that Bob would not stick to a sailor's life as John had stuck to soldiering. Bob was of an easier nature & more his mother's child than John; & being the youngest they used to call him the "nesttitpie" – meaning the last in the nest. All which information & more Loveday gave with the greatest readiness, as he had given it several times before.

He is much younger than his brother? said Mrs. Garland.

Chapter VII.

Every so many years, the miller told her. His soldier son was two & thirty, & Bob was only twenty four. When Bob returned from his present voyage he was to be persuaded to stay, & assist as grinder in the mill, & go to sea no more.

"A sailor-miller" said Anne.

"O he knows as much about mill-business as I do," said Loneday. "He was intended for it, you know, like John... But, souls," he continued, "I am before my story. As I came more particularly to ask you, ma'am, & you Anne my honey, if you will join me & a few friends at a leetle homely supper that I shall give to please the chap now he's come? I can do no less than have a bit of a randy, as the saying is, now that he's here safe & sound."

Mrs Garland wanted to catch her daughter's eye: she was in some doubt about her answer. But Anne's eye was not to be caught, for she hated hints, nods, & calculations of any kind in matters which should be regulated by impulse; & the matron replied "If so be 'tis possible we'll be there. You will tell us the day?"

He would, as soon as he had seen son John. "I will be rather untidy, you know, owing to my having no womenfolks in the house; & my man David is a poor dunderheaded feller for getting up a feast. Poor chap, his sight is bad, that's true, & he's very good at making the beds, & oiling the legs of the chairs & other furniture, or I should have got rid of him years ago."

"You should have a woman to attend to the house, Loneday," said the widow.

"Yes, I should, but..... Well, 'tis a fine day, neighbours. Hark, I fancy I hear the noise of pots & pans up at the camp; or my ears deceive me. Poor fellers, they must be hungry. — Good day t'ye, ma'am!" And the miller went away.

All that afternoon overcome ~~[illegible]~~ continued in a ferment of interest in the military investment, which brought the excitement of an invasion without the strife. There were great discussions on the merits & appearance of the soldiery. The event opened to the girls unbounded possibilities of adoring & being adored, & to the young men an embarrassment of dashing acquaintances which quite superseded falling in love. Thirteen of these lads incontinently stated within the space of a quarter of an hour that there was nothing in the world like going for a soldier. The young women stated little, but perhaps thought the more; & (though, in justice, they) ~~[illegible]~~ caused rounds towards the encampment from the corners of their blue & brown eyes in the most demure & modest manner that could be devised.

In the evening the village was lively with soldiers wives: a tree full of starlings would not have rivalled the chatter that was going on. ~~[illegible]~~ These ladies were very brilliantly dressed, with more regard for colour than for material. Purple, red, & blue capes bonnets, were numerous, with bunches of cock's feathers; & one had on an Arcadian hat of green sarcenet, turned up in front to show her cap underneath. It had once belonged to an officers lady, & was not so very much ~~[illegible]~~ stained, except where the (incidental to a military life) occasional storms of rain had caused the green to run & stagnate in curious watermarks like peninsules & islands. Some of the relations of these butterfly wives had been fortunate enough to get lodgings in the cottages, & were thus spared the necessity of living in huts & tents on the down. Those who had not been so fortunate were not rendered more amiable by the success of their sisters in arms, & called them other names than those they had been christened, to which the latter pleasantly retorted, bringing forth rejoinders of the knock-me-down class of speech; till the end of these alternative remarks ~~[illegible]~~ seemed dependant upon the close of the day. ~~[illegible]~~

X. One of these new-arrivals, who had a ~~pregnant~~ rosy nose & a slight thickness of voice which, as Anne said, she could not help, poor thing, seemed to have seen so much of the world, & to have been in so many campaigns, that Anne would have liked to take her into her own house, so as to acquire some of that practical knowledge of the history of England (which she possessed) & which could not be got from books. But the narrowness of Mrs Garland's rooms ~~generally~~ absolutely forbade this, & the homeless ~~woman~~ treasury of experience was obliged to look for quarters elsewhere.

~~[illegible]~~

X. That night Anne retired early to bed. The events of the day, cheerful as they were in themselves, had been unusual enough to disturb the calm of ~~her~~ sleep, give her a slight headache. Before getting into bed she went to the window, & drew aside the white curtains that hung across it. The moon was shining, though not as yet into the valley, but just peeping above the ridge of the Down, where the white cones of the encampment were softly touched by its light. The foremost tents of the quarter-guard showed themselves prominently; but the body of the camp, officers' tents, the kitchens, canteen, & appurtenances in the rear, were blotted out by the ground, which became of its height above her. She could discern the forms of one or two sentries moving to & fro across the disc of the moon at intervals. She could hear the frequent shuffling & tossing of the horses tied to the pickets; & in the other direction the miles-long voice of the sea, whispering a louder note at those points of its length where hampered in its ebb & flow by some jutting promontory or group of boulders. Louder sounds suddenly broke this approach to silence; they came from the camp of Dragoons, were taken up further to the right by the camp of the Hanoverians, & further on still by the body of infantry. It was tattoo. Feeling no desire to sleep she listened yet longer, looked at Charles's Wain swinging over the church tower, & the moon ascending higher & higher over the right-hand streets of tents, where instead of parade & bustle there was nothing going on but snores & dreams, the tired soldiers lying by this time under their proper canvases, radiating like spokes from the pole of each tent.

At last Anne gave up thinking, & retired like the rest. The night wore on, & except the occasional "All's well" of the sentries, no voice was heard in the camp or in the village below.

Chapter III

In which the mill becomes an important centre of operations.

The next morning, Miss Garland ~~the~~ awoke with an impression that something more than usual was going on, & she recognised as soon as she could clearly reason that the proceedings, whatever they might be, lay not far away from her bedroom window. The sounds were chiefly those of pickaxes & shovels. Anne got up, & lifting the corner of the curtain about an inch, peeped out.

A number of soldiers were busily engaged in making a zigzag path down the incline from the camp to the river-head at the back of the house, & judging from the quantity of work ~~done~~ already got through they must have begun very early. Squads of men were working at several equi-distant points in the proposed pathway, & by the time that Anne had dressed herself each section of the length had been connected with those above & below it, so that a continuous & easy track was formed from the crest of the down to the bottom of the steep. The down rested on a bed of solid chalk, & the surface exposed by the roadmakers formed a white riband, serpentining from top to bottom.

Then the relays of working soldiers all disappeared; & not long after, a troop of dragoons in watering order rode forward at the top & began to wind down the new path. They came lower & closer, & at last were immediately beneath her window, gathering themselves up on the space by the mill pond. A number of the horses entered it, & at the shallow part, drinking & splashing & tossing about. Perhaps as many as thirty, half of them with riders on their backs, were in the water at one time; & the thirsty animals drank, ~~trampled~~ stamped, plunged, & drank again, letting the clear cool water dribble luxuriously from their mouths. Miller Loveday was looking on from over his garden hedge, & many admiring villagers were gathered around.

Gazing up higher Anne saw other troops descending by the new road from the camp, those which had already been to the pond making room for these by withdrawing along the village lane & returning to the top by a circuitous route.

Suddenly the miller exclaimed as in fulfilment of expectation, "Ah John, my ~~boy~~ boy; good morning!" and the reply of "Morning, father," came from a well-mounted soldier near him, who did not, however, form one of the watering party. Anne could not see his face very clearly, but she had no doubt that this was ~~James~~ John Loveday. There were tones in the voice which reminded her of old times, those of her very infancy, when Johnny Loveday had been top boy in ~~the parish~~ the village school & had wanted to learn spelling of her father. The deeps & shallows of the mill-pond being better known to him than to any other man in the camp he had apparently come down on that account, & was cautioning some of the horsemen against riding too far in towards the mill-head.

Since her childhood & his enlistment Anne had seen him only once, & then but casually, when he was home on a short furlough. His figure was not much changed from what it had been; but the many sunrises & sunsets which had passed since that day, developing her from a comparative child to womanhood, had abstracted some of his angularities, & given him a foreign look. & reddened his skin. It was interesting to see what years of training & service had done for this man. Few would have supposed that the white & the blue coats of the miller and ~~the~~ soldier who covered the forms of father & son.

Before the last troop of dragoons rode off they were welcomed in a body by Miller Loveday, who still stood in his outer garden, this being a plot lying below the mill-tail, & stretching to the water side. It was just the time of year when cherries are ripe, & hang in clusters under their dark leaves. While the troopers loitered on their horses, & chatted to the miller across the stream,

he gathered bunches of the fruit, & held them up over the garden hedge for the acceptance of anybody who would have them; whereupon the soldiers rode into the water to where it washed the garden bank, & caught the cherries reining their horses there in their forage-caps, or received bunches of them on the ends of their sticks, with the dignified laugh that became martial men when stooping to slightly boyish amusement. It was a cheerful, careless, unpremeditated half-hour, which returned like the scent of a flower to the memories of some of those who enjoyed it, even at a distance of many years after, when they lay wounded & weak in foreign lands.

Then dragoons & horses wheeled off as the others had done; & troops of the German Legion next came down & entered in panoramic procession the space below Anne's eyes, as if on purpose to gratify her. These were noticeable by their mustachios, & queues wound tightly with brown ribbon to the level of their broad shoulder-blades. They were charmed as the others had been by the head & neck of Miss Garland in the little square window overlooking the scene of operations, & saluted her with devoted foreign civilities in such overwhelming numbers that the modest girl suddenly withdrew herself into the room, & had a private blush between the chest of drawers & the washing-stand.

When she came downstairs her mother said "I have been thinking what I ought to wear to miller Loveday's to-night."

"To miller Loveday's?" said Anne.

"Yes. The party is to-night. He has been in here this morning to tell me that he has seen his son, & they have fixed this evening".

"Do you think we ought to go, mother?" said Anne, slowly, & looking at the smaller features of the window-flowers.

"Why not?" said Mrs Garland.

"The Mays will only have men there, except ourselves. will he? And shall we be right to go alone among 'em?" Anne had not recovered from the ardent gaze

of the gallant York Hussars, whose voices reached her even now in snatches
conversed with Loveday as they had been.

"Lard Anne – how proud you are!" said widow Garland. "Why, is not he
our nearest neighbour, & our landlord. And don't he always fetch our faggots from Wood,
& keep us in vegetables for next kin to nothing?"

"That's true," said Anne.

"Well, We can't be distant with the man. And if the enemy land next autumn
as everybody says they will, we shall have quite to depend upon the miller's
waggon & horses. He's our only friend."

"Yes, so he is," said Anne. "And you had better go, mother; & I'll stay
at home. They will be all men; & I don't like going."

Mrs Garland reflected. "Well, if you don't want to go, I don't," she said.
Perhaps as you are grown up it would be better to stay at home this time."
your father was a professional man, certainly.
~~And the mother sighed.~~ Having spoken as a mother she sighed, as a woman.

"Why do you sigh, mother?"

"You are so prim & stiff about everything."

"Very well – we'll go."

"O no – I am not so sure that we ought. I did not promise, & there will
be no trouble in keeping away."

Anne apparently did not feel certain of her own opinion, & instead of supporting
or contradicting, looped thoughtfully down, & abstractedly brought her hands together
on her bosom, all her fingers met tip to tip

As the day advanced the young woman & her mother became aware that
great preparations were in progress in the miller's wing of the house. The
partitioning between the Lovedays & the Garlands was not very thorough, consisting
in many cases of a simple screwing up of the doors in the dividing walls;
& thus when the mill began any new performances they announced themselves
~~were conducted~~ at once in the more private dwelling. The smell of Miller Lovedays pipe came
down Mrs Garlands chimney of an evening with the greatest regularity. Every

time that he poked his fire they knew from the vehemence or deliberation of the blows the precise state of his mind; & when he wound his clock on Sunday nights the whirr of that monitor reminded the widow to wind hers. This transit of noises was most perfect where Loveday's lobby adjoined Mrs Garland's pantry; & Anne, who was occupied for some time in the latter apartment enjoyed the privilege of hearing the visitors arrive, [illegible] and of catching stray sounds & words without the connecting phrases that made them entertaining, to judge from the laughter they evoked. The arrivals passed through the house, & went into the garden, where they had tea in a large summer house, an occasional blink of bright colour through the foliage being all that was visible of the assembly from Mrs. Garland's windows. When it grew dusk they all could be heard coming indoors, to finish the evening in the parlour.

Then there was an intensified continuation of the above mentioned signs of enjoyment, talkings & haw-haws, runnings upstairs & runnings down, a slamming of doors & clinking of cups & glasses; till the prudent adjoining tenant without friends on his own side of the partition might have been tempted to wish for entrance to that merry dwelling, if only to know the cause of these fluctuations of hilarity, & to see if the guests were really so very numerous, and the observation so amusing as they seemed.

The stagnation of life on the Garland side of the party-wall began to have a very gloomy effect by the contrast. When, about half past nine o'clock one of these tantalising bursts of gaiety had resounded for a longer time than usual Anne said "I believe, mother, that you are wishing you had gone."

I own to feeling that it would have been very cheerful if we had joined in; said Mrs. Garland, in a hankering tone. "I was rather too nice in listening to you & not going. Lonely people must accept what company they can get." The parson never calls upon us except in his spiritual capacity, old Derriman is a mere vagabond; & there's nobody left to speak to.

"Or do without it altogether."

"That's not natural, Anne; & I am surprised to hear a young woman like you say such a thing. Nature will not be stifled in that way...." (Song & powerful chorus heard through partition). "I declare the room on t'other side of the wall seems quite a paradise compared with this."

"Mother, you are quite a girl," said Anne in slightly superior accents. "Go in & join them by all means."

"O no – not now," said her mother, resignedly shaking her head. (It is too late now. We ought to have taken advantage of the invitation.) "They would look hard at me as a poor mortal who had no real business here, & the miller would say with his broad smile "Ah, you be obliged to come round."

While the sociable Mrs Garland continued thus to pass the evening in two places, her body in her own house & her mind in the miller's, somebody knocked at the door, & directly after the elder Loveday himself was admitted to the room. He was dressed in an intervening suit between sober & gay, which he used for such occasions as the present, & his blue coat, yellow & red waistcoat with the three lower buttons unfastened, steel-buckled shoes & speckled stockings became him very well in Mrs Martha Garland's eyes.

"Your servant ma'am," said the miller, adopting as a matter of propriety the raised standard of politeness required by his higher costume. "Now, begging your pardon, I can't hae this. 'Tis unnatural that you two ladies should be biding here & we under the same roof making merry without ye. Your husband – lovely pictures that 'a would make to be sure! – poor man would have been in wi' us long ago if he had been in your place. I can take no nay from ye, upon my honour. You & maidy Anne must come in, if it be on'y for half an hour. John Jones & his friends have got passes till twelve o'clock to-night, & saving a few of our own village folk, the lowest visitor present is a very genteel German corporal. If you should hae any misgivings on the score of respectability ma'am, we'll pack off the underbred ones into the back kitchen."

Widow Garland & Anne looked yes at each other after this appeal.

"We'll follow ye in a few minutes," said the elder, smiling; & she rose with Anne to go upstairs.

"No, I'll wait for ye," said the miller doggedly; "or perhaps you'll alter your mind again."

While the mother & daughter were upstairs dressing, & saying laughingly to each other, "Well, we must go now," as if they had'nt wished to go five minutes before, other steps were heard in the passage; & the miller cried from below, "Your pardon, Mrs. Lordon Garland, but my son John has come to help fetch ye. Shall I ask him in till you be ready?"

"Certainly. I shall be down in a minute," screamed Anne's mother in a slanting voice towards the staircase.

When she descended the outline of the trumpet-major appeared halfway down the passage. "This is John," said the miller simply. "John, you can mind Mrs Martha Garland very well?

"Very well indeed," said the dragoon, coming in a little further. "I should have called to see her last time, but I was only home a week. How is your little girl, ma'am?"

Mrs Garland said Anne was quite well. "She is grown up now. She will be down in a moment."

There was a slight noise of military heels without the door, at which the trumpet-major went & put his head outside, & said "All right — coming in a minute"; whereupon a voice in the darkness replied "no hurry"

"More friends?" said Mrs Garland.

O, it is only Buck & Jones come to fetch me," said the soldier. "Shall I ask 'em in a minute, Mrs Garland, ma'am?

"O yes", said the lady; & the two interesting forms of Trumpeter Buck & Saddler-Sergeant Jones then came forward in the most friendly manner, whereupon other steps were heard without, & it was discovered that Sergeant-master-tailor Brett & Farrier-extraordinary Johnson were outside, having come to fetch Messrs Buck & Jones, as Buck & Jones had come to fetch the trumpet-major.

As there seemed a possibility of Mrs Garland's small passage being choked up with human figures personally unknown to her, she was relieved to hear Anne

coming downstairs. "Here's my little girl," said Mrs Garland. And the trumpet-major looked with a sort of awe upon the muslin apparition who came forward, & stood quite dumb before her. Anne recognised him as the trooper she had seen from her window, & welcomed him kindly. There was something in his honest face which made her feel instantly at home with him.

At this frankness of manner Loveday – who was not a ladies' man – blushed, & made some alteration in his bodily posture, began a sentence which had no end, & showed quite a boy's embarrassment. Recovering himself he politely offered his arm, which Anne took with a very pretty grace. He conducted her through his comrades, who glued themselves perpendicularly to the wall to let her pass, & then they went out of the door, her mother following with the miller, supported by the body of troopers, the latter walking with the usual cavalry gait as if their thighs were rather too long for them. Thus they crossed the threshold of the mill-house & up the passage, the paving of which was worn into a gutter by the ebb & flow of feet that had been going on there ever since Tudor times.

Chapter IV.

Who were present at the miller's little entertainment.

When the group entered the presence of the company a lull in the conversation was caused by the sight of new visitors, & (of course) by the charm of Anne's appearance; until the old men, who had daughters of their own, perceiving that she was only a half-formed girl, resumed their tales & toss-potting with unconcern.

Miller Loveday had fraternized with half the soldiers in the camp since their arrival, & the effect of this upon his party was striking – both chromatically & otherwise. Those among the guests who first attracted the eye were the sergeants & sergeant-majors of Loveday's regiment, fine hearty men who sat facing the candles, entirely resigned to physical comfort. Then there were other non-commissioned officers, a German, two Hungarians, & a Swede, from the Foreign Hussars – young men with a look of sadness on their faces, as if they did not much like serving so far from home. All of them spoke English fairly well. Old age was represented by Simon Burden the pensioner, & the shady side of fifty by Corporal Tullidge, his friend & neighbour, who was hard of hearing, & sat with his hat on over a red cotton handkerchief that was wound several times round his head. These two veterans were employed as watchers at the

neighbouring beacon, which had lately been erected by the Lord Lieutenant for firing whenever the descent on the coast should be make. They lived in a little hut on the hill close by the heap of faggots, but to-night they had found deputies to watch in their stead.

On a lower plane of experience & qualifications came neighbour James Comfort, of the volunteers, a soldier by courtesy, but a blacksmith by rights; William Tremlett of the Local Militia, & Anthony Cripplestraw of the Fencibles. The two latter men of war were dressed merely as villagers, & looked upon the regulars from an humble position in the background. The remainder of the party was made up of a neighbouring dairyman or two & their wives, invited by the miller, as Anne was glad to see, that she & her mother should not be the only women there.

The elder Loveday apologised in a whisper to Mrs Garland for the presence of the inferior villagers. "But as they are learning to be brave defenders of their home & country, ma'am, as fast as they can master the drill & have worked for me off and on these many years, I've asked 'em in, & thought you'd excuse it?"

"Certainly, miller Loveday." said the widow.

"And the same of old Burden & Tullidge, my ancient men. They have served well & long in the Foot, & even now have a hard times of it up at the beacon in wet weather. So after giving them a meal in the kitchen I just asked 'em in to hear the singing. They faithfully promise that as soon as ever the gun-boats appear in view, & they have fired the beacon, to run down here first, in case we should'n see it. 'Tis worth while to be friendly with 'em, you see, though their tempers be queer."

"Quite worth while, my worthy miller." said she.

Anne was rather embarrassed by the presence of the regular military in such force, & at first confined her words to the dairyman's wives she was acquainted with, & to the two old soldiers of the parish.

"Why didn't ye speak to me afore, chiel?" said one of these, Corporal Tullidge, the elderly man with the hat, while she was talking to old Simon Burden. "I met ye in the lane yesterday," he added reproachfully, "but ye didn't notice me at all."

"I am very sorry for it," she said; but being afraid to shout in such a company the effect of her remark upon the corporal was as if she had not spoken at all.

"You were coming along with yer head full of some high notions or other, no doubt," continued the uncompromising corporal in the same loud voice. "Ah, 'tis the young bucks that get all the notice nowadays, & old folks are quite forgot. I can mind well enough how young Bob Loveday used to lie in wait for ye."

Anne blushed deeply, & stopped his too explosive discourse by hastily saying that she always respected him. The corporal thought she inquired why he always kept his hat on, & old folks like answered that it was because his head was injured at Valenciennes, in July ninety three. "We were trying to bomb down down the tower, & a piece of the shell struck me. I was no more nor less than a dead man for two days. If it hadn't a been for that & my smashed arm I should have come home none the worse for my five & twenty years service."

"You have got a silver plate let into yer head, haven't ye, corpel," said Anthony Cripplestraw, who had many a year. "I have heard that the way they mortised yer skull was a beautiful piece of workmanship. Perhaps the young woman would like to see the place — 'tis a curious sight, mis'ess Anne; you don't see such a wownd every day."

"No, thank you," said Anne hurriedly, dreading, as did all the young people of Overcombe, the spectacle of the corporal uncovered. He had never been seen in public without his hat & handkerchief since his return in ninety four, & strange stories were told of the ghastliness of his appearance bare-headed, a little boy who had accidentally beheld him going to bed in that state having been nearly frightened into fits.

"Well, if the young woman don't want to see yer head, may be she'd like to hear yer arm?" Continued Cripplestraw, earnest to please her.

"Hey?" said the Corporal

"Your arm hurt too?" cried Anne.

"Knocked to a pummy at the same time as my head" said Tullidge dispassionately.

"Rattle yer arm, corpel, & show her," said Cripplestraw.

"Yes sure" said the corporal, raising the limb slowly, as if the glory of exhibition had lost some of its novelty, though he was willing to oblige. Twisting it mercilessly about with his right hand he produced a crunching among the bones at every motion, Cripplestraw seeming to derive great satisfaction from the ghastly sound.

"How very shocking" said Anne, painfully anxious for him to leave off.

"O it don't hurt him, bless ye — do it corpel?" said Cripplestraw.

"Not a bit" said the Corporal still working his arm with great energy.

"There's no life in the bones at all. — No life in 'em, I tell her, corpel?

"None at all."

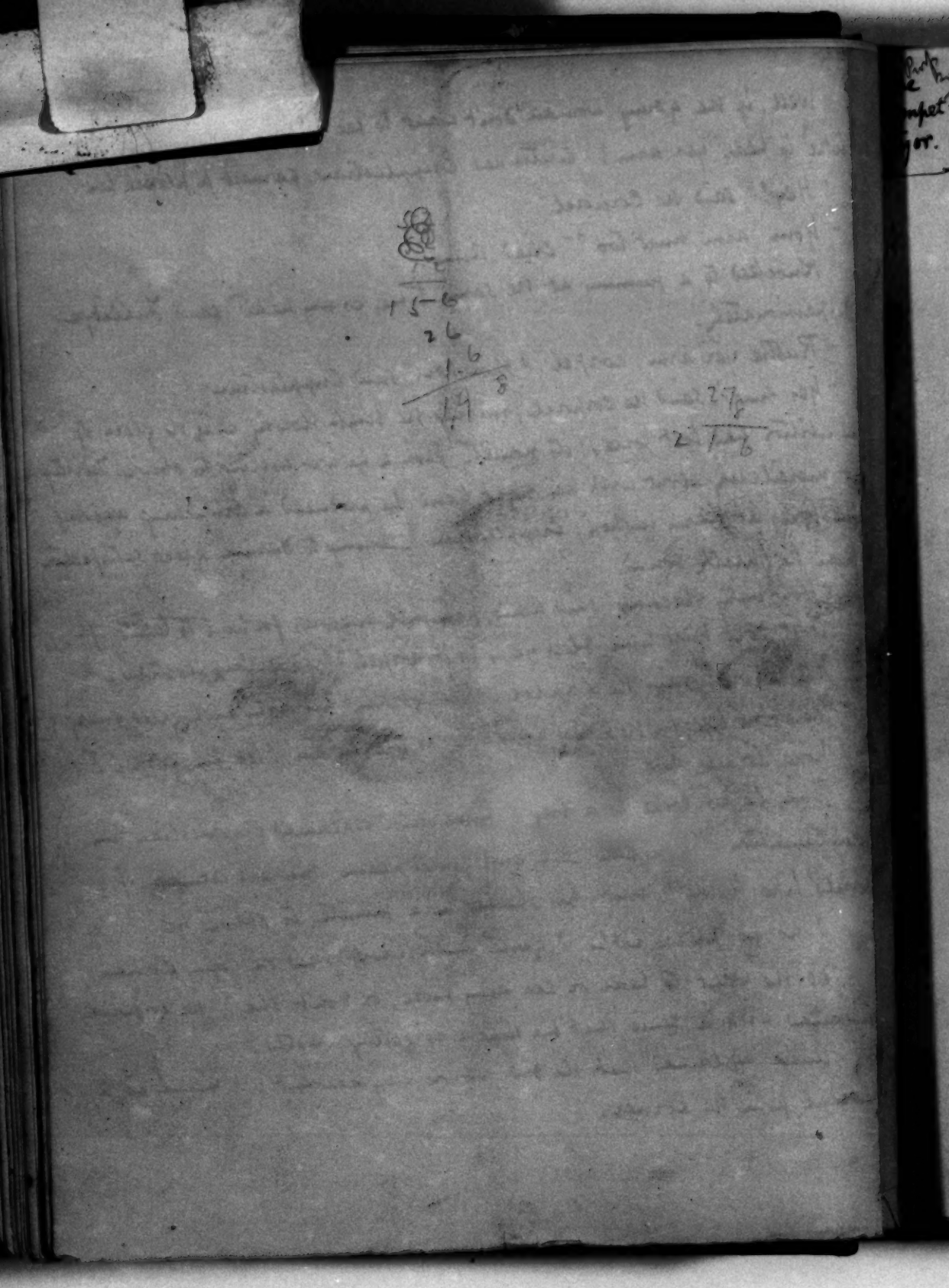
"They be as loose as a bag of nine pins" explained Cripplestraw in continuation. "You can feel 'em quite plain, mis'ess Anne. If ye would like to, he'll undo his sleeve in a minute, to oblige ye?"

"O no, no, please not! — I quite understand" said the young woman.

"Do she want to hear or see any more, or don't she?" the corporal inquired with a sense that his time was getting wasted.

Anne explained that she did not on any account; & managed to escape from the corner.

End of Part I.



Chapter V
The Song and the Stranger.

The trumpet-major now continued to place himself near her, the King's presence having evidently been a great pleasure to him since the moment of his first seeing her. She was quite at her ease with him, & asked him if he thought that Bonaparte would really come during the summer, & many other questions which the gallant dragoon could not answer, but which he nevertheless liked to be asked. William Trenlett, who had not enjoyed a sound night's rest since the First Consul's menace had become known, pricked up his ears at sound of this subject, & inquired if anybody had seen the terrible flat-bottomed boats that the enemy were to cross in.

"My brother Robert saw several of them paddling about the shore the last time he passed the Straits of Dover," said the trumpet-major; & he further startled the company by informing them that there were supposed to be more than a thousand of these boats, & that they would carry a hundred men apiece. So that a descent of one hundred thousand men might be expected any day as soon as Boney had brought his plans to bear.

"Lord ha' mercy upon us!" said William Trenlett.

"The night-time is when they will try it, if they try it at all," said old Tullidge, in the tone of one whose watch at the beacon must in the nature of things have given him comprehensive views of the situation. "It is my belief that the point they will choose for making the shore is just over there," & he nodded with indifference towards a section of the coast at a hideous nearness to the house in which they were all assembled, where Trenlett & Cripplestraw of the Locals, tried to show no signs of trepidation.

"When d'ye think 'twill be?" said Volunteer Comfat, the blacksmith.

"I can't answer to a day," said the corporal. "But it will certainly be in a down-Channel tide; & instead of pulling hard against it he'll let his boats drift, &

that will bring 'em right into Weymouth Bay. 'Twill be a beautiful stroke of war, if so be 'tis quietly done".

"Beautiful", said Cripplestraw, moving inside his clothes." But how if we should be all abed, corpse? You can expect a man to be brave in his shirt, especially we Locals, that have only got so far as shoulder fieldocks."

He's not coming this summer. He'll never come at all", said a tall sergeant-major decisively.

Loveday the soldier was too much engaged in attending upon Anne & her mother to join in these surmises, bestirring himself to get the ladies some of the best liquor the house afforded, which had, as a matter of fact, crossed the Channel as privately as Bonaparte wished his army to do, & had been landed on a dark night over the cliff. After this he asked Anne to sing; but though she had a very pretty voice in private performances of that nature, she declined to oblige him; turning the subject by making a hesitating inquiry about his brother Robert, whom he had mentioned just before.

"Robert is as well as ever, thank you Miss Garland" he said." He is now mate of the brig Pewit – very young for such a command; but the owner puts great trust in him." The trumpet-major added, deepening his thoughts to a profounder view of the person discussed, "Bob is in love.

Anne looked inquiringly conscious, & listened attentively; but Loveday did not go on.

"Much?" she presently asked.

"I can't exactly say. And the strange part of it is that he never tells us who the woman is. Nobody knows at all."

"He will tell of course?" said Anne, in the remote tone of a person with whose self such matters had no connection whatever.

Loveday shook his head, & the tête-à-tête was just an end to by a burst of singing from one of the sergeants, who was followed at the end of his song by others, each giving a ditty in his turn; the singer standing up in front of the table, stretching his chin well into the air, as though to abstract every possible wrinkle from his throat, & then plunging

into the melody. When this was over one of the Foreign Hussars – the genteel German of Miller Loveday's description, but who called himself a Hungarian, & in reality belonged to no definite country, performed at Trumpet-major Loveday's request the series of wild motions that he denominated his national dance, that Anne might see what it was like. Miss Garland was the flower of the whole company: the soldiers one & all, foreign & English, seemed to be quite charmed by her presence, as indeed they well might be, considering how seldom they came into the society of such as she.

Anne & her mother were just thinking of retiring to their own dwelling when Sergeant Stanner of the —th Foot, who was recruiting at Weymouth, began a satirical song.

When law'-yers strive' to heal' a breach',
And par'-sons prac'-tise what' they preach';
Then lit'-tle Bo'-ney he'll pounce down',
And march' his men' on Lon'-don town!'

Chorus: Rol'-li-cum ro'-rum tol'-lol-lo'-rum
Rol'-li-cum ro'-rum, tol'-lol-lay'

Poor Stanner: In spite of his satire he fell at the bloody battle of Albuera a few years after, being mortally wounded & trampled down by a French Horse when the brigade was destroyed while gallantly persisting

While Miller Loveday was saying "Well done, Mr Stanner" at the close of the thirteenth stanza, which seemed to be the last, & Mr Stanner was modestly expressing his regret that he could do no better, a voice was heard outside the window-shutter:

Rol'-li-cum ro'-rum, tol'-lol-lo'-rum
Rol'-li-cum ro'-rum, tol'-lol-lay'!

The company were silent in a moment at this phenomenon, & only the military tried not to look surprised. While all wondered who the singer could be somebody entered the porch, the door opened, & in came a young man in the uniform of the yeomanry Cavalry.

"'Tis young Derriman – Farmer Derrimans nephy" murmured voices in the background.

Without waiting to address anybody, & apparently seeing who were gathered there, the young man waved his cap above his head & went on:

When hus'-bands with' their wives' a-gree'
And maids' wont wed' from mod'-es-ty';
Then lit'-tle Bo'-ney he'll pounce down',
And march' his men' on Lon'-don town!'

Chorus: Rol'-li-cum ro'-rum, tol'-lol lo'-rum, &c &c

It was a verse which had been omitted by the gallant Stanner out of respect to the ladies.

The new comer was of florid complexion, red-haired & tall, & seemed full of a conviction that his whim of entering must be their pleasure, which indeed for the moment it was.

"No ceremony, goodmen all", he said. "I was passing by, & my ear was catched by the singing. I like singing. 'Tis warming & cheering, & shall not be put down. I should like to hear anybody say otherwise."

"Welcome master Derriman," said the miller, filling a glass & handing it to the yeoman. "Come all the way from quarters, then? I hardly knowed ye in your soldiers clothes. You'd look more natural with a spud in yer [redacted] hand. I shouldn't ha' knowed ye at all if I hadn't heard that you were called out."

"More natural with a spud – Lave a care miller," said the young man, the fire of his complexion increasing to scarlet. "I don't mean anger; but, but – a soldiers honour you know; dammy!"

The military in the background laughed a little, & the yeoman then for the first time discovered that there were more regulars present than one. He looked momentarily disconcerted; but expanded again to full assurance.

"Right, right, master Derriman: no offence. 'Twas only my joke," said the genial miller. "Everybody's a soldier nowadays. Drink a drap o'this corjel, & don't mind words."

The young man drank without the least reluctance, & said: "Yes, miller, I am called out. 'Tis ticklish times for us soldiers now. We hold our lives in our hands.... What be those fellows grinning at behind the table? – Gad, we do."

"Staying with your uncle at the farm for a day or two, Mr. Derriman?"

"No, no – as I told you – billetted at Dorchester. But I have to call & see the old, old ——"

"Gentleman."

"Gentleman no! – skinflint. He lives upon the sweepings of the barton – ha-ha." And the speaker's regular white teeth showed like snow in a Dutch cabbage. Well, well. the profession of arms makes a man proof against all that. I take things as I find 'em."

"Quite right, master Derriman. Another drop?"

"No, no – So don't tempt me." the yeoman then saw Anne, & by an unconscious gravitation went towards her & the other women, flinging a remark to John Loveday in passing: "ah, Loveday – I heard you were come – in short I came o' purpose to see you. Glad to see you enjoying yourself at home again." The trumpet-major replied civilly, though not without grimness, for he seemed hardly to like Derriman's motion towards Anne.

Widow Garland's daughter – yes 'tis surely. You remember me? – I have been here before – Festus Derriman, Yeomanry Cavalry."

Anne gave a little curtsey. "I know your name Festus – that's all."

"Yes, 'tis well known – especially latterly." He dropped his voice to confidential pitch. "I suppose your friends here are disturbed by my coming in, as they don't seem to talk much? I don't mean to interrupt the party; but I often find that people are put out by my coming among 'em – especially when I've got my regimentals on."

"La, & are they?"

Yes. 'Tis the way I have." He lowered his tone further, as if they had been old friends, though in reality he had only seen her three or four times. "and how did you come to be here? Dash my wig, I don't like to see a nice young lady like you in this company – you should come to some of our yeomanry sprees in Dorchester or Blandford. Oh Lord, the girls do come. The yeomanry are respected men – men of good substantial families, farming their own land; & every one among us rides his own charger, which is more than these cussed fellows do." He nodded towards the dragoons.

"Hush-hush! Why these are friends & neighbours of Mr. Miller Loveday – & he is

a great friend of ours – our best friend," said Anne with great emphasis, & reddening at the sense of injustice to their host. "What are you thinking of – talking like that? It is ungenerous in you.

Ha-ha – I've ~~often~~ affronted ye! Is n't that it, fair angel, ~~so~~ fair what do you call it, fair vessel? Ah well – would ~~this~~ you were safe in my own house! But honour must be minded now, not counting. Rollicum-rorum, tol-lol-lorum. Pardon me, my sweet – I like ye. It may be a come down for me (owning land) but I do like ye."

"~~Sir~~ Sir, please be quiet!" said Anne distressed.

"I will, I will, love. Well, Corporal Tullidge, how is your head?" he said, going towards the other end of the room & leaving Anne to herself.

The company had again recovered its liveliness, & it was a long time before the bouncing Rufus who had joined ~~them~~ them could find heart to tear himself away from their society & good ~~cheer~~ liquors, although he had had quite enough of the latter before he entered. The natives received him at his own valuation, & the soldiers of the camp, who sat ~~behind~~ beyond the table, smiled behind their pipes at his remarks, with a pleasant twinkle of the eye which approached the satirical, John Loveday being not the least conspicuous in this hearing. But he & his friends were too cautious on such an occasion as the present to challenge the young man's large remarks, & readily permitted him to set them right on the details of camping & other military routine – ~~subjects~~ about which the troopers ~~were~~ seemed willing to let persons hold any opinion whatever, provided that they themselves were not obliged to give attention to it; showing, strangely enough, that if there was one subject more than another which never interested their minds it was the art of war. To them the art of enjoying good company in Overcombe Mill, the details of the miller's household, ~~[illegible]~~ the swarming of his bees, the number of his chicken, & the fatness of his pigs, were matters of infinitely greater concern.

The present writer, to whom his party [redacted] has been described times out of number by the members of the Loveday family & other old people [redacted] now passed away, can never enter the old living room of Overcombe Mill without seeing the genial scene through the mists of the intervening that intervene between then & now seventy or eighty years. First & brightest to the eye are the dozen candles scattered about regardless of expense, & kept well snuffed by the miller, who walks round the room at intervals of five minutes, snuffers in hand, & nips each wick with great precision, & with something of an executioner's grim look upon his face as he closes the snuffers upon the neck of the candle. Next to the candlelights show the red & blue coats & white breeches of the soldiers — nearly twenty of them in all, besides the half-fledged Derriman — the head of the latter [redacted], & the heads of all who are standing up, being in dangerous proximity to the beams of the ceiling. There is not one among them who would attach any meaning to "Victoria", or gather from the syllables "Waterloo" the remotest idea of their own glory or death. [redacted] correct & innocent arms, little thinking what things Time has in store for her at no great distance off. She looks at Derriman with a half uneasy smile as he clanks hither & thither, & hopes he will not single her out again to hold a private dialogue with — which however he does, irresistibly attracted by the white muslin figure. She must, of course, look a little gracious again now, lest his mood should turn from sentimental to quarrelsome — so impossible contingency with the farmer-soldier, as her quick perception had noted.

"Well, well — this idling wont do for me, folks," he at last said, to Annes relief. "I ought not to have come in by rights. But I heard ye enjoying yourselves, & thought it might be worth while to see what you were up to. I have several miles to go before bedtime." And shrieking his arms, lifting his chin, & shaking his head, to eradicate any unseemly curve or wrinkle from his person, the yeoman wished them an offhand

Good-night, & departed.

"You should have teased him a little more, father," said the trumpet-major drily. "You could soon have made him as crabbed as a bear."

"I didn't want to provoke the chap – 'twasn't worth while. He came in friendly enough," said the gentle miller, without looking up from the cups & glasses he was filling to within a hair-breadth of the brim.

"I don't think he was overmuch friendly" said John.

"'Tis as well to be neighbourly with folkes, if they be not quite unbearable," his father generally replied, as he took off his coat to go & draw more ale, this periodical stripping to the shirt-sleeves being necessitated by the narrowness of the cellar & the smeary effect of its numerous cobwebs upon best clothes.

Some of the guests then spoke of Tess Derriman as not such a bad young man if you took him right & humoured him; others said that he was nobody's enemy but his own; & the elder ladies mentioned in a tone of interest that he was likely to come into a deal of money at his uncle's death. The person who did not praise him was the one who knew him best, who had known him as a boy years ago, when he had lived nearer to Overcombe than he did at present. This unappreciative person was the trumpet-major.

Chapter VI.

Farmer Derriman of Overcombe Hall.

At this time in the history of Overcombe one solitary newspaper found its way into the village. It was sent by the postmaster at Weymouth (who in some mysterious way got it for nothing through his connection with the mail) to Farmer Derriman at the Hall, by whom it was handed on to Mrs Garland when it was not more than a fortnight old. Whoever remembers anything

about Farmer Derriman will of course know well enough that this delightful privilege of reading ancient history in ~~[illegible]~~ long columns was not accorded to the Widow Garland for nothing. It was by such ingenious means that he paid her for her daughter's occasional services in reading aloud to him & making out his accounts, in which matters the farmer, whose gunnies, were reported to touch five figures — some said more — was not expert.

Mrs Martha Garland, as a respectable widow, occupied a twilight rank between the well-informed gentry & the benighted villagers, and kindly made herself useful to the former as letter-writer & reader, & general translator from the printed tongue. It was not without satisfaction that she stood at her door of an evening, newspaper in hand, with three or four cottagers standing round, & poured down their open throats any paragraph that she might choose to select from the stirring ones of the period. When she had done with the sheet Mrs Garland passed it on to the miller, the miller to the grinder, & the grinder to the grinder's boy, in whose hands it became subdivided into half pages, quarto pages & irregular triangles, & ended its career as a paper cap, a flagon-lining, or a wrapper for his bread & cheese.

Notwithstanding his compact with Mrs Garland, Farmer Derriman kept the paper so long, & was so chary of wasting his mans time on a merely intellectual errand, that unless she sent for the journal it seldom reached her hands. Anne was always her messenger. The arrival of the soldiers led Mrs Garland to dispatch her daughter for it the day after the party; & away she went in her pelisse, hatless, in a direction at right angles to that of the encampment on the hill.

Walking across the fields for the distance of about a mile she came out upon the high road by a wicket-gate. On the other side of the way was the entrance to what at first sight looked like a neglected meadow, the gate being a rotten one without a bottom rail, & broken down palings lying on each side. The dry hard mud of the opening was marked with several horse & cow tracks, that had been half obliterated by fifty score sheep tracks, surcharged with the tracks of a man & a dog. Beyond this geological record

× [Benjamin Derriman, who owned the crumbling place, had originally been only the occupier & tenant-farmer of the fields around. His wife had brought him a small fortune, & during the growth of their only son there had been a partition of the estate, giving the farmer, now a widower, an opportunity of acquiring the building & a small portion of the land attached on exceptionally low terms. But two years after the purchase ~~[illegible]~~ the boy died, & Derriman's existence was paralysed forthwith. It was said that since that event he had devised the house & fields to a distant female relative, to keep them out of the hands of his detested nephew; but this was not certainly known.

of earlier nomadic tribes appeared a carriage road nearly grown over with grass, which Anne followed. It descended by a gentle slope, dried under dark-rinded elm & chestnut trees, & conducted her on till the hiss of a waterfall became audible, when it took a bend round a swamp of fresh watercress & brooklime that had once been a fishpond: & the grey weatherworn front of a building edged from behind the trees. It was Overcombe Hall – once the seat of a family now extinct, & of late years used as a farm house.

The Hall was as interesting as mansions in a state of declension usually are, as the excellent county history showed. That popular work in folio contained an old plate dedicated to the last scion of the original owners, from which drawing it appeared that in 1750, the date of publication, the windows were covered with little scratches like black flashes of lightning, that a horn of hard smoke came out of each of the twelve chimneys, that a lady & a lap-dog stood on the lawn in a strenuously walking position, & a substantial cloud & nine flying birds of no known species hung over the trees to the north east.

The rambling & neglected dwelling had all the romantic excellencies & practical drawbacks which such mildewed places share in common with caves, mountains, wildernesses, glens, & other homes of poesy that people of taste wish to live & die in. Mustard & cress could have been raised on the inner plaster of the dewy walls at any height not exceeding three feet from the floor, where the stain ended; & mushrooms of the most refined & thin-stemmed kinds grew up through the chinks of the lawn paving. As for the outside, Nature, in the ample time that had been given her, had so mingled her filings & effacements with the marks of human wear & tear upon the house that it was often hard to say in which of the two, or if in both, any particular obliteration had its origin. The keenness was gone from the mouldings of the doorways, but whether worn out by [illegible] the rubbing past of innumerable people's shoulders, & the moving of their heavy furniture, or by Time in a grander & more abstract form, did not appear. The iron stanchions inside the window panes were eaten away to the size of wires at the bottom where they entered the stone, the condensed breathings of generations having settled there in pools

& rusted them. The panes themselves had either lost their shine altogether, or become iridescent as a peacock's tail. In the middle of the porch was a vertical sundial, whose gnomon swayed loosely about when the wind blew, & cast its shadow hither & thither, as much as to say "Here's your fine model dial: here's any time for any man: I am an old dial; & shiftiness is the best policy."

Anne passed under the arched gateway, which screened the main front: ~~[illegible]~~ over it was the porter's lodge, reached by a spiral staircase. Across the archway was fixed a row of wooden hurdles, one of which Anne opened & closed behind her. Their necessity was apparent as soon as she got inside. The quadrangle of the ancient pile was a bed of mud & manure, inhabited by calves, geese, ducks, sows & pigs surprisingly large, with young ones surprisingly small. In the grooved porch some heifers were amusing themselves by slaphching up their necks & licking the carved stone capitals that supported the vaulting. Anne went on to a second open door, across which was another hurdle to keep the live stock from absolute community with the inmates. There being no knocker she ~~[illegible]~~ knocked by means of a short stick which was laid against the post for that purpose; but nobody attending she entered the passage, & tried an inner door.

A slight noise was heard inside, the door opened about an inch, & a strip of decayed face, & some half dozen forehead-wrinkles, including the eye, appeared within the crevice.

"Please I have come for the paper," said Anne.

"O is it you dear Anne?" whined the inmate, opening the door a little further. "I could hardly get to the door to open it — I am so weak."

The speaker was a wizened old gentleman in a coat the colour of this parchment, & breeches of the same hue, embroidered at the knees, revealing a bit of leg above his stocking. The edge of his skull round his eye-sockets was visible through the skin, & he had a mouth whose corners made towards the back of his head on the slightest provocation. He walked with great apparent difficulty back into the room, Anne following him.

"Well, you can have the paper if you want it; but you never give me

much time to see what's in en. Here's the paper." He held it out, but before she could take it he drew it back again saying "I have not had my vallie o'the paper by a good deal, what with my weak sight, & people coming so soon for any, I am a poor put-upon soul; but my Duty of Man will be left to me when the newspeper is gone." And he sank into his chair with an air of exhaustion.

Anne said that she did not wish to take the paper if he had not done with it, & that she was really later in the week than usual, owing to the soldiers.

~~Soldiers and trampler upon Wales, I hope there will be no billetting in this part for what would a poor old lanniger like me do with anything~~

"Soldiers, yes – not the soldiers. And now hedges will be broke, & hens nests robbed, & sucking-pigs stole, & I don't know what all. Who's to pay for't, sure? I reckon that because the soldiers be come you don't mean to be kind enough to read to me what I ha'n't had time to read myself."

She would read if he wished, she said; she was in no hurry. And sitting herself down she unfolded the paper.

"'Dinner at Carleton House?'"

"No, faith. 'Tis nothing to I."

"'Defence of the Country'"?

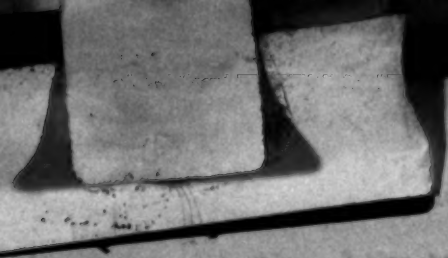
"Ye may read that, if so ye will. I hope there will be no billetting or any wild work of that sort; in this parish, for what would a poor old lanniger like myself do with soldiers in his house, & nothing to feed 'em with?

Anne began reading, & continued at her task nearly ten minutes, when she was interrupted by the appearance in the quadrangle, slough without, of a young man in the uniform of the yeomanry Cavalry.

"What do ye see out there?" said the farmer with a start, as she paused & slowly blushed.

"A soldier – one of the yeomanry" said Anne, not quite at her ease.

"Scrounch it all – 'tis my nephy!" exclaimed the old man, his face turning to a phosphoric pallor, & his body twitching with innumerable alarms as



he formed upon his face a gasping smile of joy with which to welcome the new coming relative. "Read on, pritheé Miss Garland.

Before she had read far the new visitor straddled over the door-thresh into the passage, & entered the room.

"Well, nunc, how d'ye feel?" said the young man, shaking hands with the farmer in the manner of one violently ringing a hand-bell. "Glad to see ye."

"Bad & weakish, Festus," replied the other as his person the responding passively to the rapid vibration imparted. "Oh— Be tender, please — a little softer, there's a dear nephy! My arm is no more than a cobweb."

"Ah, poor soul of ye."

"Yes. I am not much more than a skillenton, & can't bear rough ways."

"Sorry to hear that; but I'll bear your affliction in mind. Why, you are all in a tremble, uncle Benjy?"

"'Tis because I am so gratified," said the old man. "I always get all in a tremble when I be taken by surprise by a beloved relation."

"Ah — that's it!" said the yeoman bringing his hand down on the back of his uncle's chair with a loud smack, at which Uncle Benjy nervously sprang three inches from his seat & dropped into it again. "Ask your pardon for frighting ye, uncle. 'Tis how we do in the army, & I forgot your nerves. You have scarcely expected to see me, I daresay, but here I am."

"I be glad to see ye. You be not going to stay long, perhaps?"

"Quite the contrary — I am going to stay ever so long!"

"Oh I see. I am so glad, dear Festus. Ever so long, did ye say?"

"Yes, even so long," said the young gentleman, sitting on the slope of the bureau & stretching out his legs as props. "I am going to make this quite my own home whenever I am off duty, as long as we stay out. And after that, when the campaign is over in the autumn, I shall come here, & live

with ye like your own son, & help manage your land & your farm, you know, & make you a comfortable old man."

"Ah!"

"[illegible]"

"[illegible] How you do please me!" said the farmer with a horrified smile, & grasping the arms of his chair to sustain himself.

"I have been meaning to come a long time, as I knew you'd like to have me, Uncle Benjy; & 'tisn't in my heart to refuse you."

"You always was kind that way."

"Yes, I always was. But I ought to tell you at once, not to disappoint you, that I shan't be here always – all day, that is, because of my military duties as a cavalry man."

"Oh, not always? That's a pity!" exclaimed the farmer with a cheerful eye.

"I knew you'd say so. And I shan't be able to sleep here o'nights sometimes, for the same reason."

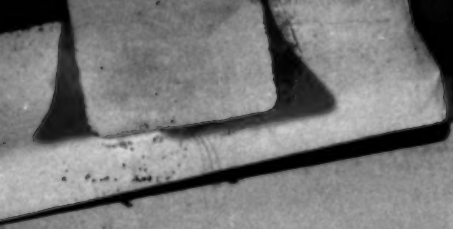
"Not sleep here o'nights?" said the old gentleman still more relieved. "You ought to sleep here – you certainly ought, in short you must. But you can't!"

"Not while we are with the colours. But directly that's over – the very next day – I'll stay here all day, & all night too, to oblige you. Since you ask me so kindly."

"Th-thank ye – that will be very nice!" said Uncle Benjy.

"Yes. I knew 'twould relieve you." And he kindly stroked his uncle's head, the old man expressing his enjoyment of the affectionate token by a death's-head grimace. "I should have called to see you the other night when I passed through here," Festus continued; "but it was so late that I couldn't come so far out of my way. You won't think it unkind?"

"Not at all – if you couldn't. I never shall think it unkind if you really can't come, you know," Festy. There was a few minutes pause, & as the nephew said nothing Uncle Benjy went on: "I wish I had a little present money for ye. But as ill-luck would have it we have lost a deal of stock this year, & I have had to pay away so much –



"Poor old man – I know you have. Shall I lend you a seven-shilling piece, Uncle Benjy?"

– you must have your joke –

Ha-ha – well, I'll think o'that .... And so they expect Buonaparty to choose this very part of the coast for his landing – hey? – and that he'll be ordered to stand in front as the forlorn hope."

"Who says so?" asked the florid son of Mars, losing a little redness."

"The newspaper-man."

"Oh, there's nothing in that," said Festus blandly. "The government thought it possible at one time; but they don't know." Festus went on to explain that even if the enemy came at all it might not be at this part of England, and certainly would not be till later in the summer. As for him, Festus, he wished Boney might come; but no such good luck, he said. The fact was, that the actual reason for the arrival of the troops at this particular time was not altogether fear of Boney's landing just there, but that the king was coming again to Weymouth during the summer & it became necessary to keep a good guard in the vicinity on his account. Festus turned himself as he talked, & he now said abruptly, "Ah, who's this – why 'tis our little Anne!" He had not noticed her till this moment, the young woman having at his entry kept her face over the newspaper, & then got away to the back part of the room. "And are you & your mother always going to bide down there in the mill-house catching the little fishes, miss Anne?"

She said that it was uncertain, in a tone of trustful precision which the question was hardly worth, looking frankly at him as she spoke. But she blushed pitifully, in her arms & hands as much as in her face. Not that she was overpowered by the great boots, formidable spurs, & other fierce appliances of his person, as he imagined; simply she had not been prepared to meet him there.

"I hope you will, I am sure, for my own good," said he letting his eyes linger on the round of her cheek.

Anne became a little more dignified, & her look showed reserve. But

the yeoman on perceiving this went on talking to her in so civil a way that he irresistibly amused her, though she tried to conceal all feeling. At a brighter remark of his than usual her mouth moved, her upper lip playing uncertainly over her white teeth; it would stay still – no, it would withdraw a little way in a smile; then it would flutter down again: & so it wavered like a butterfly in a tender desire to be pleased & smiling, & yet to be also sedate & composed; to show him that she did not want compliments, & yet that she was not so cold as to wish to repress any genuine feelings he might be anxious to utter.

"Shall you want any more reading Mr Derriman?" said she interruptly to the younger man in his remarks. "If not I'll go home-along."

"Don't let me ~~interrupt~~ hinder ye longer," said Festus. "I am off in a minute or two, when your man has cleaned my boots."

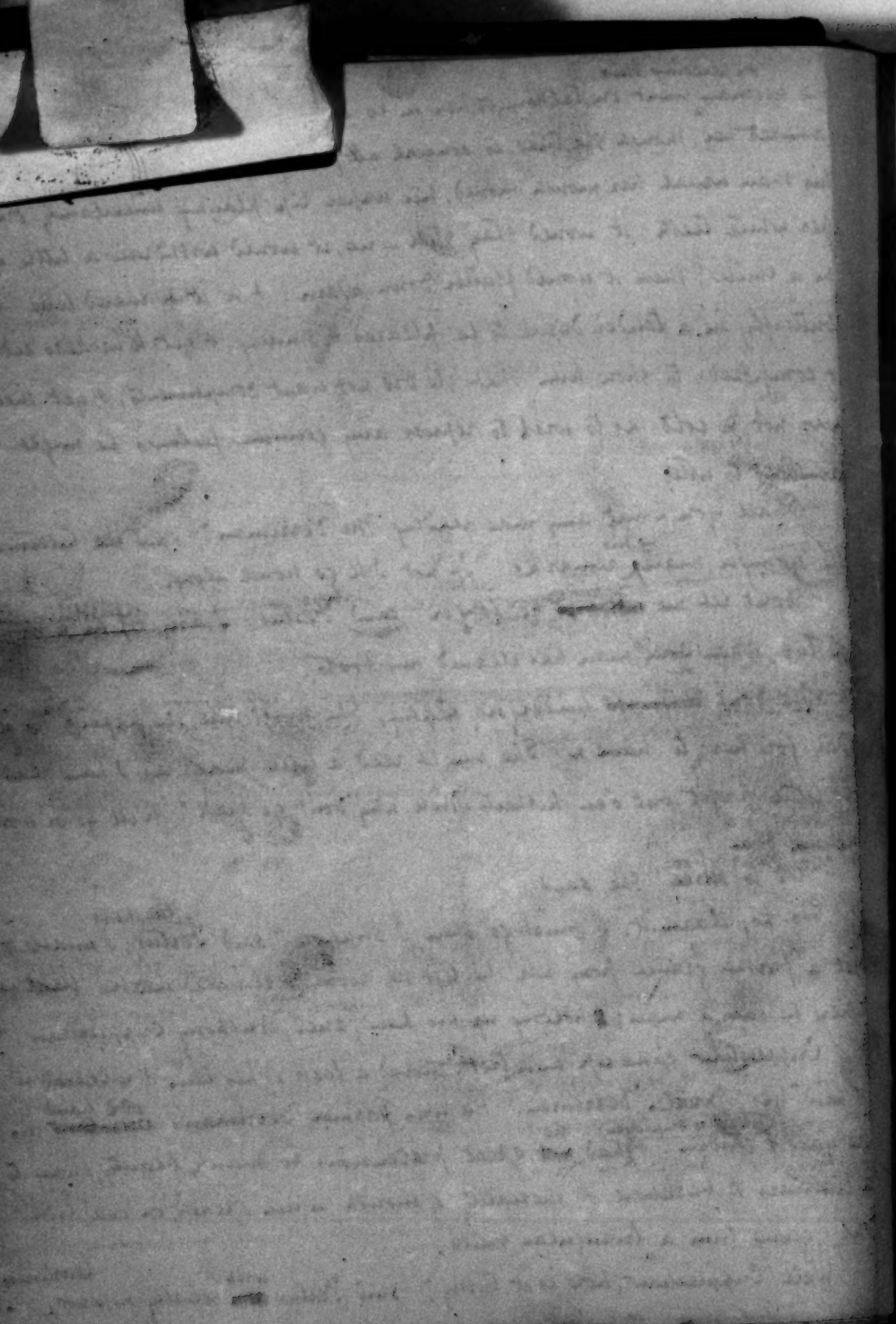
Ye don't ~~interrupt~~ hinder us, nephy. She must hae the paper: 'tis the day for her to have'n. She might read a little more, as I have had so little profit out o'en hitherto. Well, why don't ye spak? Will ye or won't ye my dear?

"Not to ~~three~~ two," she said

"Ho-ho; daam it, I must go then, I suppose," said Festus laughing; & unable to get a further glance from her he left the room & clanked into the back yard where he saw a man; & holding up his hand he cried, "Anthony Cripplestraw!"

Cripplestraw came up in a trot, moved a lock of his hair & replaced it, & said "Yes, Maister Derriman." He was Farmer Derriman's odd hand in the yard & garden; & (like his employer) had no great pretensions to manly beauty, owing to a limpness of backbone & specialty of mouth, which opened on one side only, giving him a triangular smile.

"Well, Cripplestraw, how is it to-day?" said Festus with heartiness socially superior



- Middling considering." "Maister Derriman, and how's yerself?"

"Fairish... Well, now see d clean these military boots of mine – I'll cock my foot up on this bench. This cursed pigstye of my uncle's is not fit for a soldier to come into."

- Yes, maister Derriman, I will. No, 'tis not fit, Maister Derriman."

- What stock has uncle lost this year, Cripplestraw? "[illegible] let's see Sir. I can call to mind that we've lost three chicken, a tom-pigeon, d a weakly sucking-pig – one of a pare of ten. I can't think of no more, maister Derriman."

"H'm – not a large quantity of cattle... No old rascal!"

"No, 'tis not a large quantity. Old what, did you say, Sir?"

[illegible] "Oh nothing – He, within there." Festus flung his forehead in the direction of a right line towards the inner apartment. "He's a regular sniche one. Hee-Hee – said Cripplestraw shaking his head in delighted censure.

Fie, fie, maister Derriman, Gentlefolks shouldn't talk so. And a officer, Mr Derriman! 'Tis the duty of all calvery gentlemen to bear in mind that their blood is a knowed thing in the country, d not to speak ill o't.

"He's close pisted."

"Well, maister, he is – I own he is a little. 'Tis the nater of some old venerable gentlemen to be so. We'll hope he'll treat ye well in yer fortune, sir."

"Hope he will... Do people talk about me here, Cripplestraw?" asked the yeoman, as the other continued busy with his boots.

"Well yes, Sir; they do – off d on, you know. They says you be as fine a piece of calvery flesh d bones as was ever growed on fallow ground. In short all owns that you be a fine fellow, Sir." I wish I was nt no more afraid of the French than you be; but being in the Locals, Maister Derriman I assure ye I dream of having to defend my country every night; d I don't like the dream at all."

"You should take it careless, Cripplestraw, as I do, & 'twould soon come natural to ye not to mind it at all.... Well, a fine fellow is not everything, you know. O no. There's as good as I in the army, & even better."

"And they say that when you fall this summer you'll die like a man."

"When I fall?"

"Yes, sure, maister Derriman. Poor soul o'thee! I shan't forget'ee as you lie mouldering in yer soldiers grave."

"Hey?" said the warrior uneasily. "What makes 'em think I am going to fall?"

"Well, Sir, by all accounts the yeomanry will be put in front."

"~~Opposition~~ Front. That's what my uncle has been saying."

"Yes, by all accounts 'tis true. And naterelly they'll be mowed down like grass; & you among 'em, poor young ~~officer~~ gallant officer!"

"Look here, Cripplestraw. This is a daamed foolish report. How can yeomanry be put in front? Nobody's put in front. We yeomanry have nothing to do with Buonaparty's landing. We shall be away in a safe place, guarding the possessions & jewels..... How can you see, Cripplestraw, any way at all that the yeomanry can be put in front? Do ye think they really can?"

"Well, maister, I am afraid I do," said the cheering Cripplestraw. "And I know a great warrior like you is only too glad o'the chance. 'Twill be a great thing for ye – death & glory. In short I hope from my heart you will be, & I say so very often to Fokes – in fact, I pray at night –"

"O daam! – you needn't pray about it."

"No, maister ~~Dear~~ Derriman, I won't."

"Of course my sword will do its duty. That's enough." "And now be off with ye."

Hestlin returned to his uncle's room & found that Anne was just leaving. He was inclined to follow her at once, but as she gave him no opportunity

of doing this he went to the window, & remained tapping his fingers against the shutter while he crossed the yard.

"Well, nephy, you are not gone yet?" said the farmer looking dubiously at Festus from under one eyelid. "You see how I am. Not by any means better, you see; so I can't entertain 'ee as well as I would."

You can't nurse; you can't. I don't think you are worse – if I do damn my wig. But you'll have plenty of opportunities to make me welcome when you are better. If you are not so brisk inwardly as you was, why not try change of air? This is a dull damp hole."

"'Tis Festus; & I am thinking o'moving."

"Ah – where to?" said Festus, with surprise & interest.

"Up into the little garret in the north corner. There is no fireplace to the room, but I shan't want that, poor soul o'me."

"'Tis not moving very far."

"'Tis not. But I have not a soul belonging to me within ten mile; & you know very well that I couldn't afford to go lodgings that I had to pay for."

I know it – I know it, uncle Benjy. Well, don't be disturbed. I'll come & manage for 'ee as soon as ever this Boney alarm is over; but when a man's country calls he must obey, if he is a man."

"A splendid spirit!" said Uncle Benjy with much admiration on the surface of his countenance. "I never had it. How could it have got into the boy!"

"From my mother's side perhaps."

"Perhaps so. Well, take care of yourself, nephy," said the farmer waving his hand impressively; "take care." In these warlike times your spirit may carry ye into the arms of the enemy; & you be the last of the family. You should think of this, & not let yer bravery carry ye away."

"Don't be disturbed uncle; I'll control myself," said Festus, betrayed into

against his will
self-complacency [illegible]. "at least I'll do what I can, but nature will out sometimes.... Well, I'm off." He began humming "Brighton Camp" & promising to come again soon retired with assurance, each yard of his retreat adding private poignancy to his uncle's [illegible] sense.

When the young man had disappeared through the porter's lodge Uncle Benjy showed preternatural activity for one in his invalid state, jumping up quickly without his stick, at the same time opening & shutting his mouth quite silently, like a thirsty frog, which was his way of expressing mirth. He ran upstairs as quick as an old squirrel, & went to a dormer window which commanded a view of the grounds beyond the gate, & the foot-path that stretched across them to the village.

"Yes, yes!" he said in a repressed scream, dancing up & down. "He's after her: she've hit en!" For there appeared upon the path the figure of Anne Garland, & hastening on at some little distance behind her the swaggering shape of Festus. She became conscious of his approach, & moved more quickly. He moved more quickly still, & overtook her. She turned as if in answer to a call from him, & he walked beside her till they were out of sight. The old man then played upon an imaginary fiddle for about half a minute [illegible]; & suddenly discontinuing these signs of pleasure, went downstairs again.

Chapter VII

How they talked [illegible] in the green pastures.

"You often come this way?" said Festus to Anne, rather before he had overtaken her.

"I come for the newspaper & other things," she said, her forehead perplexed by a doubt whether he were there by accident or design.

They moved on in silence, Festus beating the grass with his switch in

a masterful way. "Did you speak, miss'ess anne?" he asked.

"No," said [illegible]anne.

"Ten thousand pardons - I thought you did. Now don't let me drive ye out of the path. I can walk among the high grass & giltyeups - they will not yellow my stockings as they will yours. Well, what do you think of a lot of soldiers coming to the neighbourhood in this way?"

"I think it is very lively, & a great change" she said with demure seriousness.

"Perhaps you don't like us warriors as a body?"

[illegible]anne smiled without replying.

"Daamy, you are laughing now!" said the yeoman looking searchingly at her, & blushing like a little fire. "What do you see to laugh at?"

- Did I laugh?" said [illegible]anne, a little scared at his sudden ear[illegible] motion.

"Why yes; you know you did, you young sneerer," he said like a cross baby. "You are laughing at me - that's who you are laughing at. I should like to know what you would do without such as me if the French were to drop in upon ye any night?"

"Would you help to beat them off?" said she

"Can you ask such a query? What are we for? - But you don't think anything of soldiers."

Oh yes, she liked soldiers, she said, especially when they came home from the wars, covered with glory; though when she thought what doings had won them that glory she did not like them quite so well. The gallant yeoman appeased a[illegible] said he supposed her to mean chopping off heads, blowing out brains, & that kind of business, & thought it quite right that a tender-hearted thing like her should feel a little horrified. But as for him he should not mind such another Blenheim this summer as the army had fought a hundred

years ago, or whenever it was – damn his wig if he should mind it at all. –
"Hullo – now you are laughing again; yes, I saw you!" And the choleric
Festus turned his blue eyes & flushed face upon her as though he would
read her through. Anne strove valiantly to look calmly back; but
her eyes could not face his, & they fell. "You did laugh!" he repeated.
"It was only a tiny little one" she said.
"Ah – I knew you did," said he. "Now what was it you laughed at?"
"I only – thought that you were – merely in the yeomanry" she murmured
shily.
"And what of that?"
"And the yeomanry only seem farmers that have lost their senses"
"yes, yes; I knew you meant some jeering o'that sort, Miss'ess Anne.
But I suppose 'tis the way of women, & I take no notice. I'll confess that
some of us are no great things; but I know how to draw a sword, don't I? –
Say I don't, just to provoke me."
"I am sure you do" said Anne sweetly. If a Frenchman came
up to you, Mr. Derriman, would you take him on the hip, or on the thigh?"
"Now you are flattering! he said, his white teeth unconsciously showing themselves in a
smile." Well, of course I should draw my sword – no, I mean my sword
would be already drawn; & I should put spurs to my horse – charger as
we call it in the army; & I should ride up to him & say – no, I should'nt
say anything of course – men never waste words in battle; I should take
him with the third guard, low point, & then coming back to the second
guard –"
"But that would be taking care of yourself – not hitting at him?"
she cried. He beams upon his face turning to a livid cloud in a moment.
How can you say that? How can you understand military terms
who've never had a sword in your life? I should take him with

the sword at all." He went on with eager sulkiness; "I should take him with my pistol. I should pull off my right glove, & throw back my goat-skin; then I should open my priming-pan, & cast about — no I should it, that's wrong; I should draw my right pistol, & as soon as loaded, seize the weapon by the butt; then at the word 'Cock your pistol' I should —"

"Then there is plenty of time to" Anne said innocently. "Did you ever hear such words of command in the heat of battle?

"Naw!" said the yeoman his face again in flames. "Why of course I am only telling you what would be the word of command if — There, now! you la —"

"I did'nt — 'pon my word I did'nt!"

"No — I don't think you did. It was my mistake. — Well, then I come neatly to present, looking well along the barrel — along the barrel — & fire. — Of course I know well enough how to engage the enemy.... But I expect my old uncle has been setting you against me."

"He has not said a word," replied Anne. "Though I have heard of you, of course."

"What have you heard? — nothing good I daresay. It makes my blood boil within me!"

"Oh, nothing bad" said she assuringly. "Just a word now & then."

"Now come, tell me, there's a dear. I don't like to be crossed. It shall be a sacred secret between us. Come, now."

Anne was embarrassed, & her smile was uncomfortable. "I shall not tell you" she said at last.

"There it is again!" said the yeoman, throwing himself into a despair. "I shall soon begin to believe that my name is not worth sixpence here."

"I tell'ee 'twas nothing against you," repeated Anne.

"That means it might have been for me," said Festus in a mollified

tone. "Well, though, to speak the truth I have a good many faults, some people will praise me I suppose. 'Twas praise?

"It was".

"Well, I am not much at farming, & I am not much in company, & I am not much at figures, but perhaps I must own, since it is forced upon me, that I can show as fine a soldier's figure on the esplanade as any man of the cavalry."

"You can," said Anne; for though her flesh crept in mortal terror of his irascibility, she could not resist the fearful pleasure of leading him on. "You look very well – in short, you are –"

"What? – well they say I am good-looking. I don't make myself; so 'tis no praise – Hullo – what are you looking across there for?"

"Only at a bird that I saw fly out of that tree," said Anne

"What – only at a bird, do you say," he said in a voice of thunder as she persistently kept her face away. "I see your shoulders a shaking, young madam. Now don't you provoke me, with that laughing: By God, it won't do!"

"Then go away!" said Anne, suddenly changed from mirthfulness to irritation by his rough manner. "I don't want your company, you great bragging thing! You are so touchy there's no bearing with you. Go away."

"No, no, Anne! I am wrong to speak to 'ee so. I give you free liberty to say what you will to me – say I am not a bit of a soldier, or anything – abuse me – do, now, there's a dear: I'm scum – I'm frosh – I'm dirt afore the besom – Oh yes!"

"I have nothing to say. Stay where you are till I am out of this field."

"Well – there's such command in your looks that I hain't heart to go against 'ee .... You will come this way to-morrow at the same time? Now don't be uncivil." [She was too generous not to forgive him, but the short little life murmured that she did not think it at all likely she should come that way to-morrow.

"Then Sunday?" he said

"Not Sunday," said she.

"Then Monday – Tuesday – Wednesday, surely?" he went on experimentally.

She answered that she should probably not see him on either day, & by way of cutting short the argument went through the wicket into the other field.

Festus paused, looking after her; & when he could no longer see her slight figure he swept away his deliberations, began singing, & turned off in the other direction.

End of Part 2.

PART III. Willis W G.W.

Chapter VIII.

Anne makes a circuit of the camp.

When Anne was crossing the last field she saw approaching her an old woman (with crevassed cheeks) who surveyed the earth & its inhabitants through the medium of brass rimmed spectacles. Shaking her head at Anne, till the glasses shone like two moons she said, "Ah, ah, I seed ye! If I had only kept on my short ones that I use for reading the Collect & Gospel I should'nt have seed ye; but thinks I, I be going out o'doors, and I'll put on my long ones, little thinking what they'd show me. Ay I can tell folk at any distance with these – 'tis a beautiful pair for out o'doors; though my short ones be best for close work, such as darning & catching fleas, that's true.

"What have you seen, Granny Seamore?" said Anne.

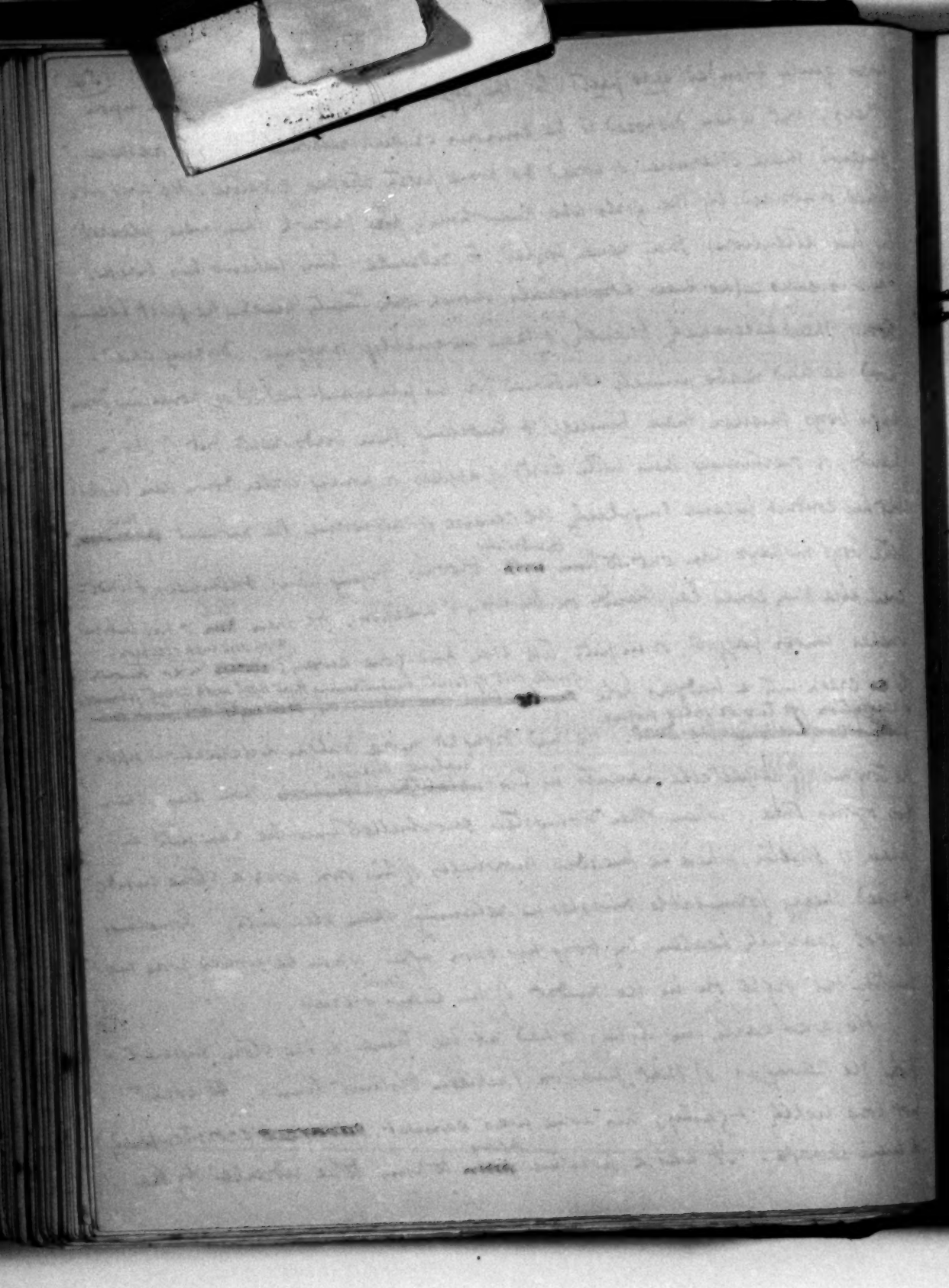
"Fye, fye, Miss Nancy – you know! said G. S., shaking her head still. "But he's a fine young feller, & will have all his uncle's money when 'a's gone." Anne said nothing to this, & looking ahead with a smile passed Granny Seamore by.

Festus, the cause of the remark, was at this time about three & twenty, a fine fellow as to feet & inches, & of a remarkably warm tone in skin & hair. Symptoms of beard & whiskers had appeared upon him at a very early age, owing to his persistent use of the razor before there was any necessity for its operation. The snake boy had scraped unseen in the outhouse, in the cellar, in the wood-shed, in the stable, in the empty pig-sty, in the cow-stalls, in the barn, & wherever he could set up his triangular bit of looking-glass without observation, or extemporize a mirror by sticking up his hat on the outside of a window pane. The result now was that, did he neglect to use the instrument he once had trifled with, a fine rust broke out upon his countenance on the first day, a golden lichen on the second, & a fiery stubble on the third, to a degree which admitted of no further postponement.

His disposition divided naturally into two, the boastful & the cantankerous. When Festus put on the big pot, as it is classically called, he was

was quite blinded ipso facto to the diverting effect of that mood & manner upon others; but when disposed to be envious or quarrelsome he was rather shrewd than otherwise, & could do some pretty strokes of satire. He was both liked & abused by the girls who knew him, for though they were pleased by his attentions they never failed to ridicule him behind his back. In his cups — (he knew those vessels, though only twenty three) — he first became noisy, then excessively friendly, & then invariably nagging. During childhood he had made himself renowned for his pleasant habit of pouncing down upon boys smaller than himself, & knocking their birds-nests out of their hands, or overturning their little carts of apples, or pouring water down their backs; but his conduct became singularly the reverse of aggressive the moment the little boys' mothers ran out to him, brandishing brooms, frying-pans, skimmers, & whatever else they could lay hands on by way of weapon. He then fled, & hid behind bushes, under faggots, or in pits, till they had gone away; (& on one such occasion) it was known to creep into a badger's hole quite out of sight, maintaining that spot with great firmness & resolution for two or three hours. He had brought more vulgar ejaculations upon the tongues of respectable parents in his native village than any other boy of his time. When other youngsters snowballed him he ran into a place of shelter, where he kneaded snowballs of his own, with a stone inside, & used these formidable missiles in returning their pleasantry. Sometimes he got fearfully beaten by boys his own age, when he would roar most lustily, but fight on in the midst of his tears, blood, & curses.

He was early in love, & had at the time of the story suffered from the ravages of that passion thirteen distinct times. He could not love lightly & gaily; his love was earnest, crossgrained, & even savage. It was a positive agony to him to be ridiculed by the



object of his affections, & such conduct drove him into a frenzy of persistence in. He was a torment to those who behaved humbly towards him, cynical with those who denied his superiority, & a very nice fellow towards those who had the courage to ill-use him.

Why her mother was so persistent on so small a matter quite puzzled the girl; but she put on her hat & started.

This young gentleman & Anne Garland did not cross each others paths again for a week. Then her mother began as before about the newspaper, & though Anne did not much like the errand she agreed to go for it on Mrs. Garland pressing her with unusual anxiety. [As she had expected Fortes appeared at a stile over which she sometimes went for shortness sake, & showed by his manner that he awaited her. When she saw this she kept straight on, as if she would not enter the park at all.

"Surely this is your way?" said Festus.

"I was thinking of going round by the road," she said.

"Why is that?"

She paused as if she were not inclined to say. "I go that way when the grass is wet," she returned at last.

"It is not wet now," he persisted. "The sun has been shining on it these nine hours." The fact was that the way by the path was less open than by the road, & Festus wished to walk with her uninterrupted. "But of course it is nothing to me what you do." He flung himself from the stile & walked away towards the house.

Anne, supposing him really indifferent, took the same way, upon which he turned his head & waited for her with a proud smile.

"I cannot go with you," she said decisively.

"Nonsense, you foolish girl. I must walk along with you down to the corner."

"No, please, Mr Derriman; we might be seen."

"Now, now — that's shyness!" he said jocosely.

"No — you know I cannot let you."

"But I must"

"But I do not allow it."

"Daam it now — I will."

"Then you are unkind, & I must submit" she said her eyes brimming with tears.

"Ho-ho – what a shame of me! My soul, I would do any such thing for the world," said the repentant yeoman. Haw-haw, why I thought you "Go away" meant "come on", as it does with so many of the women I meet – especially in this clothes. Who was to know you were so confoundedly serious".

As he did not go Anne stood still, & said nothing.

"I see you have a deal more caution, & a deal less good nature, than I ever thought you had," he continued emphatically.

"No Sir; it is not any planned manner of mine at all" she said earnestly. "But you will see, I am sure, that I could not go down to the Hall with you without putting myself in a wrong light."

Yes, that's it – that's it. I am only a fellow in the yeomanry cavalry – a plain soldier I may say; & we know what women think of such: that they are a bad lot – men you must not speak to for fear of losing your character – chaps you avoid in the roads like bulls – chaps that come into a house like open, dam't the stains wi' their boots, stain the furniture wi' their drink, talk rubbish to the servants, abuse all that's holy & righteous, & are only saved from being carried off by old Nick because they are wanted for Boney." [illegible]

"Indeed, I did not know you were thought so bad of as that," said she simply.

"What, don't my uncle complain to you of me? You are a favourite of that handsome, nice old gaffer's, I know."

"Never."

"Well, what do we think of our nice trumpet-major, hey?"

Anne closed her mouth up tight, built it up in fact, to show that no answer was coming to that question

"O now. Come, seriously, Loveday is a good fellow, & so is his father."

"I don't know."

"What a close little rogue you are! There is no getting anything out of ~~'ee~~. I believe you would say 'I don't know' to every mortal question, ~~you~~ so very discreet ~~[illegible]~~ as you are. ~~[illegible]~~ Upon my heart there are some women who would say 'I don't know', to 'Will ye marry me."

The brightness upon Anne's cheek & in her eyes during this remark showed that there was a fair quantity of life & warmth beneath the discretion he complained of. Having spoken thus he drew aside that she might pass, & bowed very low. Anne formally inclined herself & went on.

She had been at vexation point all the time that he was present, from a haunting sense that he would not have spoken to her so freely had she been a young woman with thriving male relatives to keep forward admirers in check. But she had been struck, now as at their previous meeting, with the power she possessed of working him up either to irritation or to complacency at will; & this consciousness of being able to play upon him as upon an instrument disposed her to a humorous considerateness, & made her tolerate even while she rebuffed him.

When Anne got to the Hall the farmer as usual insisted upon her reading what he had been unable to get through, & held the paper tightly in his skinny hand till she had agreed. He sent her to a hard chair that she could not possibly injure to the extent of a pennyworth by sitting in it a twelvemonth, & watched her from the outer angle of his near eye while she bent over the paper. His look might have been suggested by the sight that he had witnessed from his window on the last occasion of her visit, for it partook of the nature of concern. The old man was afraid of his nephew, physically & morally, & he began to regard Anne as a fellow sufferer under the same despot. After

this shy & curious gaze at her he withdrew his eye again, so that when she casually lifted her own there was nothing visible but his keen blunt profile as before.

When the reading was about half-way through the door behind him opened & footsteps crossed the threshold. The farmer diminished perceptibly in his chair, & looked fearful, but pretended to be absorbed in the reading, & quite unconscious of an intruder. Anne felt the presence of the swashing Festus, & stopped her reading.

"Please go on, miss Anne," he said. "I am not going to speak a word." He withdrew to the mantelpiece & leaned against it at his ease.

"Go on, do ye, maidy Anne", said Uncle Benjy, keeping down his tremblings by a great effort to half their natural extent.

Annes voice became much lower now that there were two listeners, & her modesty shrank somewhat from exposing to Festus the appreciative modulations which an intelligent interest in the subject drew from her when unembarrassed. But she still went on, that he might not suppose her to be disconcerted, though the ensuing ten-minutes was one of disquietude. She knew that the bothering yeomans eyes were travelling over her form from his position behind, creeping over her shoulders, up to her head, & across her arms & hands. Old Benjy on his part knew the same thing, & after sundry endeavours to peep at his nephew from the corner of his eye, he could bear the situation no longer.

"Do ye want to say anything to me, nephy?" he asked quaked.

"No, uncle, thank ye:" said Festus heartily. "I like to stay here, thinking of ye, & looking at your back hair."

The nervous old man writhed under this vivisection, & Anne read on; till to the relief of both the gallant fellow grew tired of his amusement,

& went out of the room. Anne soon finished her paragraph, & rose to go, determined never to come again as long as Festus haunted the precincts. Her face grew warmer as she thought that he would be sure to waylay her on her journey home to-day.

On this account, when she left the house, instead of going in the customary direction, she bolted round to the north side, through the bushes, along under the kitchen-garden wall, & through a door leading into a rutted cart-track which had been a pleasant gravelled drive when the fine old Hall was in its prosperity. Once out of sight of the windows she ran with all her might till she had quitted the park by a route directly opposite to that towards her home. Why she was so seriously bent upon doing this she could hardly tell; she had not been afraid that Festus would personally harm her; but the instinct to run was irresistible.

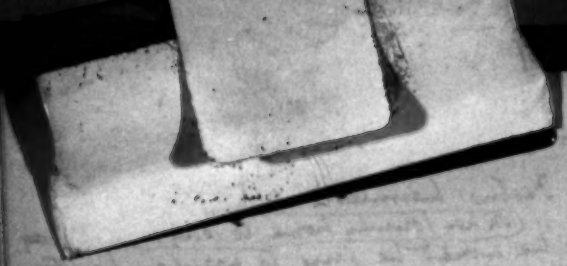
It was necessary now to clamber over the down to the left of the camp, & make a complete circuit round the latter — infantry, cavalry, sutlers, & all — descending to her house on the other side. This tremendous walk she performed at a rapid rate, & avoiding every beaten track to keep clear of the knots of soldiers taking a walk never once turning her head; when she at last got down to the levels again she paused to fetch breath, & murmured, "Why did I take so much trouble! He would not, after all, have hurt me."

As she neared the mill an erect figure with a blue body & white thighs descended before her from the down towards the village, & met past the mill to a stile beyond, over which she usually returned to her house. Here he lingered. On coming nearer Anne discovered this person to be Trumpet-major Loveday; & not wishing to meet anybody just now Anne passed quickly on, & entered the house by the garden door.

"My dear Anne, what a time you have been gone," said her mother.

"Yes, I have been round by another road."

"Why did you do that?"



Anne looked thoughtful & reticent. Her reason was almost too silly a one to confess. "Well, I wanted to avoid a person who is very busy in trying to meet me – that's all," she said.

Her mother glanced out of the window. "And there he is, I suppose," she said as John Loveday, tired of looking for Anne at the stile in the field, passed the house on his way to his father's door. He could not help casting his eyes towards their windows; & seeing them he smiled, & looked conscious.

Anne's reluctance to mention Festus was such that she did not correct her mother's error, & the dame went on. "Well, you are quite right, my dear. Be friendly with him; but no more – at present. I have heard of him often again, & think it is a very wise choice. I am sure you have my best wishes in it, & I only hope it will come to a point."

"What's that?" said the astonished Anne.

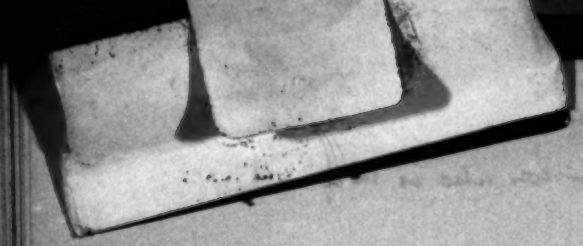
"You & Mr. Festus Derriman, dear. You need not mind me. I have known it for several days. Old Granny Seamore called here Saturday & told me she saw him coming home with you across Park Close last week, when you went for the newspaper; so I thought I'd send you again today, & give you another chance."

"When you didn't want the paper – & it was only for that! Good heavens gracious, "He's a very fine young fellow: he looks a thorough woman's protector."

"He may look it," said Anne. "I don't like him at all."

"He has given up the freehold farm his father held at Pitstock, & lives independent on what the land brings him. And when Farmer Derriman dies he'll have all the old man's money, besides sixteen horses, cart & hack, a fifty-cow dairy, & at least five hundred sheep for certain. He'll be worth ten thousand pound, if a penny."

Anne turned away, & instead of informing her mother that she had been running like a doe to escape the interest her presumptive lover alluded to, merely said "Mother, I don't like this at all."



Chapter IX

Anne is kindly fetched by the trumpet-major.

After this Anne would on no account walk in the direction of the Hall, for fear of another rencounter with young Derriman. In the course of a few days it was told in the village that the old farmer had actually gone for a week's holiday & change of air to Weymouth, at the instance of his nephew Festus. This was a wonderful thing to hear of Uncle Benjy, who had not slept outside the walls of Overcombe Hall for many a long year before; & Anne well imagined what extraordinary pressure must have been put upon him to induce him to take such a step. She pictured his unhappiness at the bustling watering-place, & hoped no harm would come to him.

She spent much of her time indoors or in the garden, hearing little of the camp movements beyond the periodical Ta-ta-ta-taa of the trumpeters sounding their various ingenious calls for Watch-setting, Stables, Feed, Boot-&-saddle, Parade, & so on; which made her think how clever her friend the trumpet-major must be to teach his pupils to play those pretty little tunes so well.

On the third morning after Uncle Benjy's departure she was disturbed as usual while dressing by the tramp of the troops down the slope to the mill-pond; & during the now familiar stamping & splashing which followed there sounded upon the glass of her window a slight smack, which might have been caused by a whip or switch. She listened more particularly, & it was repeated. As John Loveday was the only dragoon likely to be aware that she slept in that particular apartment she imagined the signal to come from him, though wondering that he should venture upon such a freak of familiarity. [Wrapping herself up in a cloak she went to the window, gently drew up a corner of the curtain, & peeped out, as she had done many times before. Nobody who was not

quite close beneath her window could see her face; but, as it happened, somebody was close. The soldiers whose floundering Anne had heard were not Lovedays dragoons, but a troop of the York Hussars, quite oblivious of her existence. They had passed on out of the water, & instead of them there sat Festus Derriman alone on his horse, & in plain clothes, the water reaching up to the animal's belly & Festus's heels elevated over the saddle to keep them out of the stream, which threatened to wash rider & horse into the deep mill-head just below. It was plainly he who had struck her lattice, for in a moment he looked up, & their eyes met. Festus laughed loudly, & slapped her window again; & just at that moment the dragoons began prancing down the slope in review order. She could not but wait a minute or two to see them pass, while doing so she was led to draw back, dropping the corner of the curtain, & blushed privately in her room. She had not only been seen by Festus Derriman, but by John Loveday, who, riding along with his trumpet slung up behind him, had looked over his shoulder at the phenomenon of Derriman beneath Anne's bedroom window, & seemed quite astounded at the sight.

She was quite vexed at the conjunction of incidents, & went no more to the window till the dragoons had ridden far away & she had heard Festus's horse laboriously waded on to dry land. When she looked out there was nobody left but Miller Loveday, who usually stood in the garden at this time of the morning to say a word or two to the soldiers, of whom he already knew so many, & was in a fair way of knowing many more, from the liberality with which he handed round mugs of cheering liquor whenever parties of them walked that way.

In the afternoon of this day Anne walked to a christening party at a neighbour's in the adjoining parish of Springham, intending to walk home again before it got dark; but there was a slight fall of rain towards evening, & she was pressed by the people of the house to stay on the night. With some hesitation she accepted their hospitality; but at ten o'clock, when they were thinking of going to bed, they were startled by a smart rap at the door, and on it being unbolted a manly form was seen in the shadows outside.

"Is Miss Garland here?" the visitor inquired, at which Anne suspended her breath.

"Yes" said Anne's entertainer warily.

Her mother is very anxious to know what's become of her. She promised to come home." To her great relief Anne recognized the voice as John Loveday's, & not Festus Derriman's as she had feared.

"Yes I did Mr Loveday" said she coming forward." But it rained, & I thought my mother would guess where I was?"

Loveday said with diffidence that it had not rained anything to speak of at the camp or at the mill, so that her mother was rather alarmed.

"And she asked you to come for me?" Anne inquired.

This was a question which the trumpet-major had been needing during the whole of his walk thither. "Well, she didn't exactly ask me," he said rather lamely, but still in a manner to show that Mrs Garland had indirectly enjoined such to be her wish. In reality Mrs Garland had not addressed him at all on the subject, She had merely spoken to her father on finding that her daughter did not return, & received an assurance from the miller that the precious girl was doubtless quite safe. John heard of this enquiry, [illegible] having a pass that evening resolved to relieve Mrs Garland's mind on his own responsibility. Ever since his

morning view of Festus under her window he had been on thorns of anxiety, & his thrilling hope now was that she would walk back with him.

He shifted his foot nervously as he made the bold request. Anne felt at once that she would go. There was nobody in the world whose care she would more readily be under than the trumpet-major's in a case like the present. He was their nearest neighbour's son, & she had liked his single-minded inoffensiveness from the first moment of his return home.

When they had started on their walk Anne said in a practical way, to show that there was no sentiment whatever in her acceptance of his company. "Mother was much alarmed about me, perhaps?"

"Yes; she was uneasy," he said; & then was compelled by conscience to make a clean breast of it. "I know she was uneasy, because my father said so. But, I did not see her myself. The truth is, she doesn't know I am come."

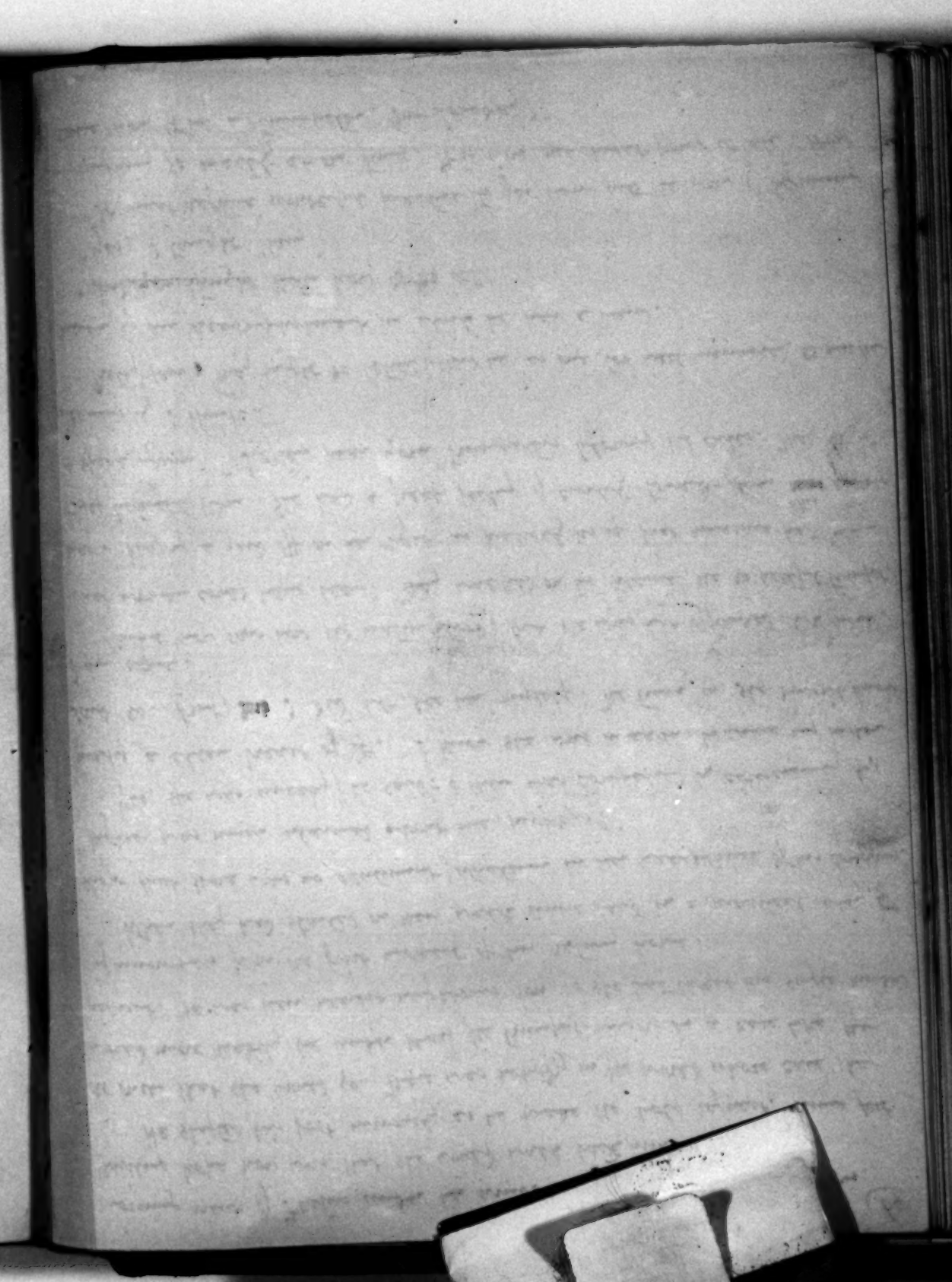
Anne now saw how the matter stood; but she was not offended with him. What woman could have been? They walked on in silence, the respectful trumpet-major keeping a yard off on her right as precisely as if that measure had been fixed between them. She had a great feeling of civility towards him this evening, & spoke again. "I often hear your trumpeters blowing the calls. They do it beautifully I think."

"Pretty fair, they might do better," said he, as one too well-mannered to make much of an accomplishment in which he had a hand.

"And you taught them how to do it?"

"Yes; I taught them."

"It must require wonderful practice to get them into the way of beginning & finishing so exactly at one time. It is like one throat doing it all. How came you to be a trumpeter, Mr Loveday?"



"Well, I took to it naturally when I was a little boy," said he, betrayed into quite a gushing state by her delightful interest. "I used to make trumpets of paper, elder-sticks, elbrot stems, & even stinging-nettle stalks, you know. Then father set me to keep the birds off that little barley-ground of his, & gave me an old horn to frighten 'em with. I learnt to blow that horn so that you could hear me for miles & miles. Then he bought me a clarionet; & when I could play that I borrowed a serpent, & learned to play a tolerable bass. So when I listed I was picked out for training as trumpeter as once."

"Of course you were."

"Sometimes, however I wish I had never joined the army. My father & your father showed me how to draw horses – on a slate I mean. You gave me a very fair education, & I ought to have done more than I have.

"What – did you know my father & my brother Bob?" she asked with new interest.

"Oh yes – for years. You were little mites of things then; & you used to cry when we big boys looked at you, & make pigs-eyes at you, which we did sometimes. Many & many a time I stood by while he worked your poor father – ah, you don't remember much about him; but I do!"

Anne remained thoughtful; & the moon broke from behind the clouds, lighting up the wet foliage with a twinkling brightness, & lending to each of the trumpet-major's buttons & spurs a little ray of its own. They had come to the old park gate, & he said "Do you like going across, or round by the lane?"

"We may as well go by the nearest road," said Anne. They entered the Park, following the half-obliterated drive till they came almost opposite the Hall, when they entered a footpath leading on to the village. While hesitating they heard a shout, or chorus of exclamation, apparently from within the walls of the dark buildings near them.

"What was that?" said Anne.

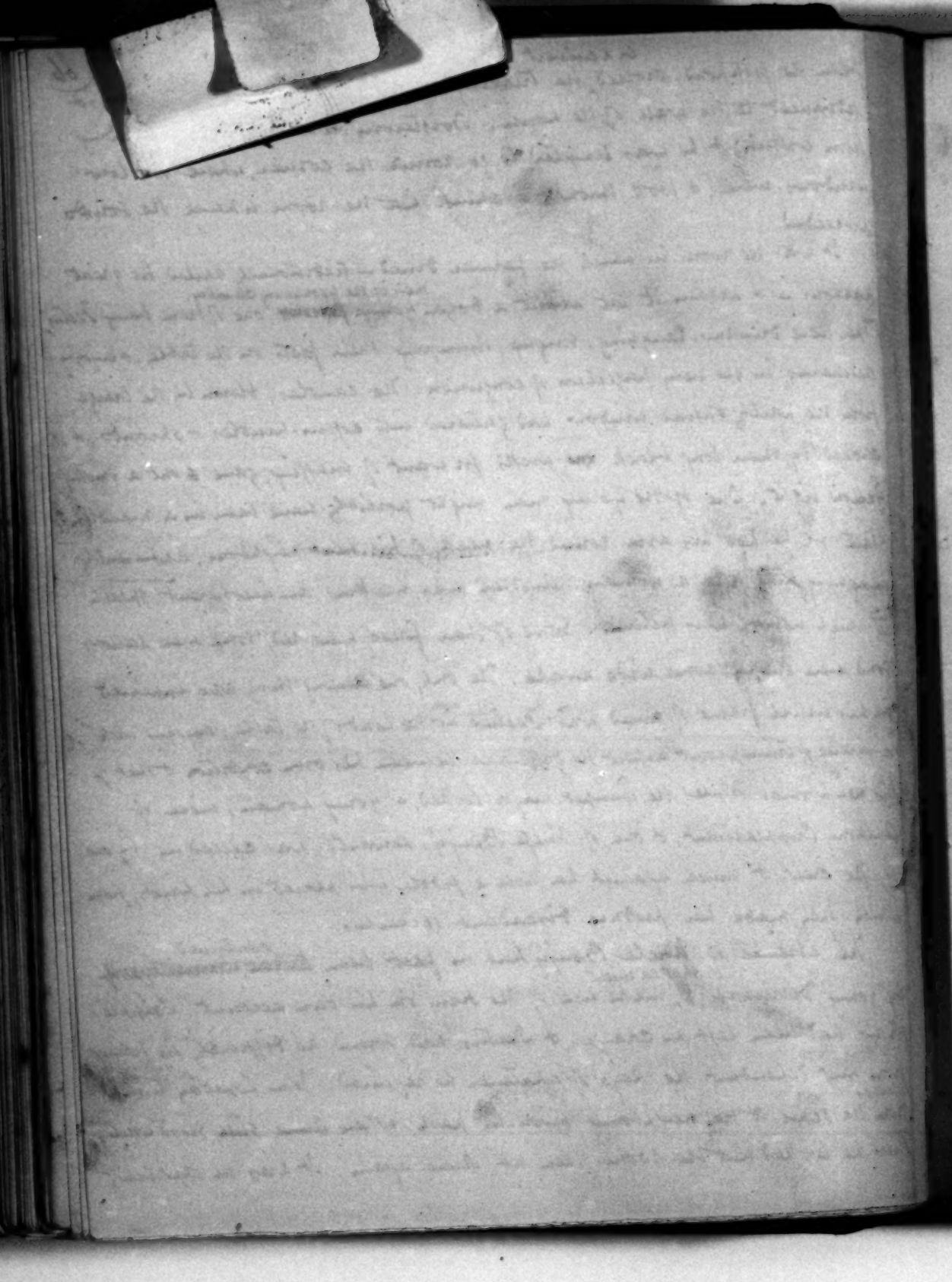
"I don't know," said her companion. "I'll go & see."

He went round the intervening swamp of watercress & brookslime which had once

been the fish-pond, crossed by a culvert the trickling brook that still flowed that way, & advanced to the wall of the house. Boisterous noises were resounding from within, & he was tempted to go round the corner, where the low windows were, & look through a chink into the room whence the sounds proceeded.

It was the room in which the farmer dined — traditionally called the great parlour — & within it sat about a dozen young men of the Yeomanry Cavalry, one of them being Festus. They were drinking, laughing, singing, thumping their fists on the table, & enjoying themselves in the very perfection of confusion. The candles, blown by the breeze from the partly opened window, had guttered into coffin-handles & shrouds, & choked by their long black wicks for want of snuffing, gave out a smoky yellow light. One of the young men might possibly have been in a maudlin state, for he had his arm round the neck of his next neighbour, apparently imagining him to be a woman. Another was making an incoherent speech to which nobody was listening. Some of their faces were red, some were sallow; some were sleepy, some wide awake. The only one among them who appeared in his usual frame of mind was Festus at the head of the table, enjoying with a serene & triumphant aspect the difference between his own condition & that of his neighbours. While the trumpet-major looked, a young woman, niece of Anthony Cripplestraw, & one of Uncle Benjy's servants, was called in by one of the crew, & much against her will a fiddle was placed in her hands, from which they made her produce discordant screeches.

The absence of Uncle Benjy had in fact been contrived by young Derriman that he might make use of the Hall on his own account. Cripplestraw had been left in charge, & Festus had found no difficulty in forcing from that dependent the keys of whatever he required. John Loveday turned his eyes from the scene to the neighbouring moon-lit path, where Anne still stood waiting. Then he looked into the room, then at Anne again. It was an opportunity



of advancing his own cause with her by opposing Festus, for whom he began to entertain hostile feelings of no mean force.

"No - I can't do it," he said. "It's underhand. Let things take their chance."

He moved away & then perceived that Anne, tired of waiting, had crossed the stream, or almost come up with him. "What is the noise about?" she said.

"There's company in the house," said Loveday.

"Company?

"Farmer Derriman is not at home," said Anne, & went on to the window whence the rays of light leaked out, the trumpet-major standing where he was. He saw her face enter the beam of candlelight, stay there for a moment, & quickly withdraw. She came back to him at once. "Let us go on," she said.

Loveday imagined from her tone that she must have an interest in ~~[illegible]~~ Derriman, & said sadly, "You blame me for going across to the window, & leading you to follow me."

"Not a bit," said Anne seeing his mistake as to the state of the heart, & being rather angry with him for it. "I think it was most natural, considering the noise."

Silence again. "Derriman is sober as a judge" said Loveday as they turned to go. "It was only the others who were noisy."

"Whether he is sober or not is nothing whatever to me," said Anne.

"Of course not - I know it," said the trumpet-major in accents expressing unhappiness at her somewhat cool tone, & some doubt of her assurance.

Before they had ~~[illegible]~~ emerged from the shadow of the hall some persons were seen moving along the road. Loveday was for going on just the same; but Anne, from a shy feeling that it was as well not to be seen walking alone with a man who was not her lover, said "No Loveday; let us wait here a minute till they have passed." On nearer view the group was seen to comprise a man on a donkey & another man walking beside him. When they were opposite the house they halted, & the rider dismounted, whereupon a dispute between him

& the other man entered, apparently on a question of money.

"'Tis Farmer Derriman come home!" said Anne, "& he has hired that donkey to bring him. Only fancy!"

Before they had gone many steps further the farmer & his companion had ended their dispute, & the latter mounted the donkey & cantered away, Uncle Benjy coming on to the house at a nimble pace. as soon as he observed Loveday & Anne he fell into a feebler gait; & when they came up he recognized Anne.

"And you have come home from Weymouth so soon, Farmer Derriman?" said he

"Yes, faith, I couldn't bide at such a ruination place," said the farmer. "Your hand in your pocket every minute of the day. 'Tis a shilling for this, half a crown for that; if you only eat one egg, or even a poor windfall of an apple, you've got to pay; & a bunch o' radishes is a halfpenny, & a quart o' cider a good tuppence, three-farthings at lowest reckoning. Nothing without paying! I couldn't even get a ride home upon that donkey without the man wanting a shilling for it, when my weight didn't take a penny out of the beast. I've saved a penn'orth or so of shoe-leather to be sure; but the saddle was so rough wi' patches that 'a took twopence out of the seat of my best breeches. More than that King George have ruined Weymouth for the folks. My nephy promised to come there to-morrow to see me – & if I had stayed I must have treated en. – Hey – what's that?

It was a shout from within the walls of the building, & Loveday said "Your nephew is here – & his company."

My nephy here? gasped the old man. Good folks, will you come up to the door with me? – I mean – hee-hee – just for company. Dear me, I thought my house was as quiet as a church."

They went back to the window, & the farmer looked in, his mouth falling to a greater width apart at the corners than in the middle, & his fingers assuming a state of radiation. 'Tis my best silver tankets that I've never used (that I've) Oh 'tis my strong beer! 'Tis eight candles guttering away when I've used nothing but tenties myself for the last half year!"

"You didn't know he was here then?" said Loveday.

"Oh no!" said the farmer, shaking his head halfway. "Nothing's known to poor I! – There's my best rummers jingling as careless as if 'twas tin cups; & my table scratched; & my chairs wrenched out of joint. See how they tilt 'em on the two back legs! & that's ruin to a chair! Ah, when I be gone he wont find another old man to make such work with, & provide goods for his breaking, & house-room & drink for his tear-brass set!"

"Comrades & fellow soldiers," said Festus to the hot farmers & yeomen he entertained within. "As we have vowed to brave danger & death together, so we'll share the couch of peace. You shall sleep here to-night, for it is getting late. My scram blue-vinnied gallicrow of an uncle takes care that there shant be much comfort in the house; but you can curl up on the furniture if beds run short. As for my sleep, it wont be much. I'm solemnly a woman has, I may say, got my heart in her pocket, & I have hers in mine. She's not much – to other folk, I mean – but she is to me. The little thing came in my way, & conquered me. I do crave that simple maid! I ought to have looked higher – I know it – what of that? 'Tis a fate that may happen to the greatest men."

"Whath her name?" said one of the warriors, whose head occasionally drooped upon his epaulettes by accident, & whose eyes fell together in the casual manner characteristic of the tired soldier. (It was really Farmer Stubb of Duddle Hole)

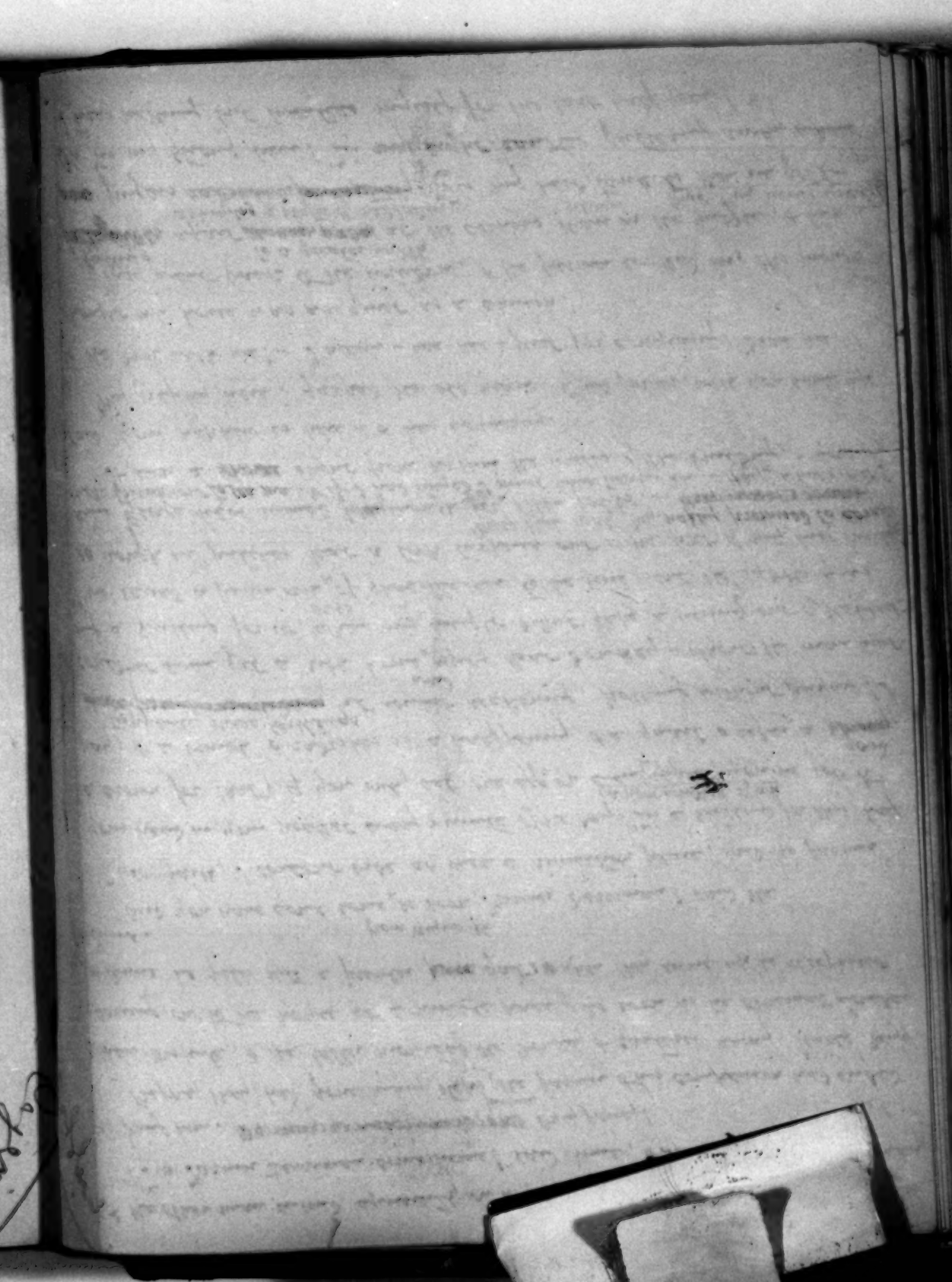
"Her name. Well, 'tis spelt [redacted] A, N, – by gad, I wont give ye her name here in company. She dont live a hundred miles off, however, & she wears the prettiest cap ribbons you ever seen.... Well, well; 'tis weakness. She has little, & I have much; but I do adore that girl in spite o' myself!"

"Let's go on", said Anne

"Prithee stand by a old man till he's got into his house!" implored Uncle Benjy. "I only ask ye to bide within call. Stand back under the trees – & I'll do my poor best to gie no trouble."

"I'll stand by you for half-an-hour" said Loveday. "After that I must bolt to camp."

"Very well – bide back there under the trees" said Uncle Benjy. "I don't want to spite 'em."



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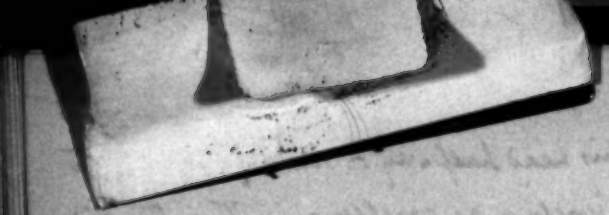


just to see if he gets in?"

"You'll wait a few minutes," said the trumpet-major to Anne as they retired from the old man.

"I want to get home" said Anne angrily

When they had quite receded behind the tree trunks, & he stood alone, Uncle Benjy, to their surprise set up a loud shout, altogether beyond the imagined power of his lungs. "Man a lost! man a lost!" he cried, repeating the exclamation several times; & then ran & hid himself behind a corner of the building. Soon the door opened, & Festus & his guests came tumbling out upon the green.

"'Tis our duty to help folks in distress" Festus said, "Man a lost - where are ye?"

"'Twas across there" said one of his friends.

"No - 'twas here" said another

Meanwhile Uncle Benjy coming from his hiding place, had scampered with the quickness of a boy up to the door they had quitted, & slipped in. In a moment the door flew together, & Anne heard him bolting & barring it inside. The revellers however did not notice this, & came on towards the spot where the trumpet-major & Anne were standing. "Do not fear us."

"Here's succour at hand, friends," said Festus. "We be all King's men."

"Thank you," said Loveday. "So be we." He explained in two words that they were not the distressed traveller who had cried out, & turned to go on.

"'Tis she - my life 'tis she!" said Festus, now first recognising Anne. "Fair Anne - I will not part from you till I see you safe at your own dear door."

"She's in my hands," said Loveday civilly though not without firmness. "So it is not required, thank you."

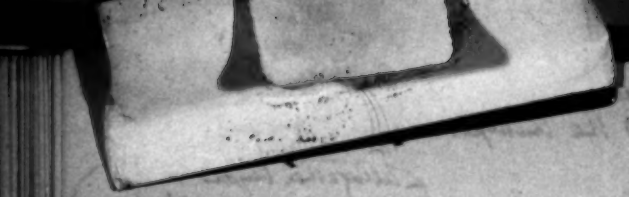
"Man - had I but my sword -"

"I'd throw it over that elm," said Loveday.

"Hey?" said Festus.

"Come," said Loveday, I don't want to quarrel. "Let's put it to her. Whichever of us she likes best, he shall take her home. Miss Anne, which?"

Anne would much rather have gone home alone, but seeing the remainder of the yeomanry party staggering up she thought it best to become



a protector of some kind. How to choose one without offending the other & provoking a quarrel was the difficulty. "You must both walk home with me", she said. "One on one side, & one on t'other. And if you are not quite civil to one another all the time I'll never speak to either of you again."

They agreed to the terms, & the other yeomen arriving at this time said they would go also, as rear guard.

"Very well", said Anne. "Now go & get your hats, & don't be long."

Ah, yes – our hats," said the yeomanry, whose heads were so hot that they had forgotten their nakedness till then.

"You'll wait till we've got 'em – we won't be a moment?" said Festus eagerly.

Anne & Loveday said yes, & Festus ran back to the house, followed by all his band.

"Now let's run & leave 'em!" said Anne when they were out of hearing.

"But – we've promised to wait" said the trumpet major in surprise.

"Promised to wait!" said Anne indignantly. As if one ought to keep such a promise to drunken men as that. You can do as you like – I shall go."

"It is hardly fair to leave the chaps" said Loveday reluctantly, & standing quite still. But she heard no more, & flitting off under the trees was soon lost to his sight.

Festus & the rest had by this time reached Uncle Benjy's door, which they were discomfited & astonished to find closed. They began to knock & then to kick at the venerable timber, till the old man's head, crowned with a tasselled nightcap, appeared at an upper window, followed by his shoulders, with apparently nothing on but his shirt, though it was in truth a sheet thrown over his coat.

"Fie – fie upon ye all for making such a hullaballoo at a weak old man's door," he said. "What's in ye to rouse honest folks at this time o' night?"

"Daam me – why – 'tis Uncle Benjy! Haw-haw-haw!" said Festus. "Hum, why how the devil's this? – 'Tis I – Festus – wanting to come in."

"O no no, my clever man, whoever you be!" said Uncle Benjy in a tone of incredulous integrity. "My nephy, dear boy, is miles away at quarter,

& sound asleep by this time as becomes a soldier. That story won't do to-night my man, not at all."

"Upon my soul 'tis I," said Festus.

"Not to night, my man – not to night. – Anthony, bring my blunderbuss," said the farmer turning & addressing nobody inside the room.

"Let's break in the window-shutters," said one of the men.

"My wig, & we will! said Festus. "What a trick of the old man!"

"Get some big stones," said the yeomen, searching under the wall.

"No – forbear, forbear," said Festus beginning to be frightened at the spirit he had raised. "I forget – we should drive him into fits, for he's subject to 'em; & then perhaps 'twould be manslaughter. – Comrades, we must march. No – we'll lie in the barn. I'll see into this – take my word for't. Our honour is at stake. – Now let's back to see my beauty home."

"We can't, as we haven't got our hats," said one of his fellow troopers – in domestic life Jacob Noakes of Muckleford Farm.

"No more we can!" said Festus in a melancholy tone. But I must go to her & tell her the reason – she pulls me in spite of all!"

"She's gone. I seed her flee across Park while we were knocking at the door," said another of the yeomanry.

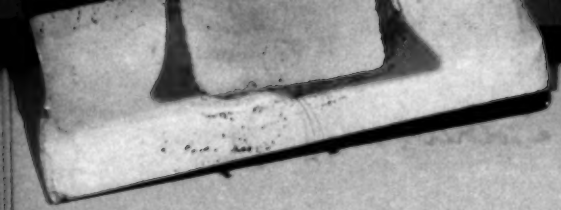
"Gone!" said Festus grinding his teeth & pulling himself into a fixed shape. "Then 'tis my enemy – he has tempted her away with him! But I am a rich man, & he's poor, & rides the kings horse while I ride my own. Could I but find that feller, that regular, that common man – I would –"

"Yes?" said the trumpet major coming up behind him.

"I" said Festus starting round, "I would – seize him by the hand, & say, "Guard her – if you are my friend, guard her from all harm!"

"A good speech. And I will, too," said Loveday heartily.

"And now for shelter", said Festus to his companions. They then unceremoniously left Loveday without wishing him good-night, & proceeded towards the barn. He crossed the park & ascended the down to the camp, grieved that he had given Anne cause of complaint, & fancying that she held him of slight account beside his wealthier rival.



Chapter X.

The matchmaking virtues of a double garden.

Anne was so flurried by the military incidents attending her return home that she was almost afraid to venture alone outside her mothers premises. Moreover the numerous soldiers, regular & casual, that haunted Overcombe & its neighbourhood were getting better acquainted with the villagers, & the result was that they were always standing at the garden-gates, walking in the orchards, or sitting gossiping just within the cottage doors, with the bowls of their tobacco pipes thrust outside for politeness sake, that they might not defile the air of the household. Being gentlemen of a gallant & most affectionate nature they naturally turned their heads & smiled if a pretty girl passed by. Which was rather disconcerting to the latter if she were unused to society. Every belle in the village soon had a lover, & when the belles were all allotted those who scarcely deserved that title had their turn, many of the soldiers being not at all particular about half an inch of nose more or less, a trifling deficiency of teeth, or a larger crop of freckles than is customary among the Saxon race. Among the pretty girls, Sally Beach, Caroline Hayward, Nelly Mitchell & Jenny Burden & Susan Comfort adored foreigners, & hence chose from the Hanoverian Hussars; while Betsy Turner, Lucy Strickland, Annie Blake & Sally Silverthorn were more English in their tastes & chose dragoons. Poor Thyrza Brown, Ruth Cripplestraw, Fanny Jackson, & others of that class, though they would have been content with any nationality, did not choose at all, because they could not; but they were eventually chosen without in the least expecting it, & honoured like the rest, one of them being lucky enough to bring down a lance-sergeant who had passed over the professed beauties with indifference. Thus with one & another, courtship began to be practised in Overcombe on rather a large scale, & the dispossessed young men who had been born in the place were left to take their walks alone, where instead of studying the works of nature they meditated gross outrages on the eyes,

noses, teeth, backs, & other parts of the brave men who had been so good as to visit their humble village.

Anne watched these romantic proceedings from her window with much interest, though the loved ones were girls considerably her inferiors in origin & education, & the sight bred within her a melancholy sense of her own loneliness. To see round-faced Nelly Mitchell, who brought the washing, & tiny Susan Comfort, crabbed Sarah Beach walk by on the gorgeous arms of Full Private Knockheelmann, Sergeant Flitzenberger, & Corporal Klaspenkissen respectively, of the thrilling York Hussars, who swore the most picturesque foreign oaths, & had a wonderful sort of estate or property, called the Vaterland, in their strange & unknown country across the sea — to see these girls walk by in the company of such distinguished men with as much ease & confidence as if they were merely Tom Penny or Jack Ha'penny who worked & muddled in the next parish, made Anne think of things which she tried to forget, & to look into a little drawer at something soft & brown that lay in a coil there, wrapped in paper. So, thus beholding the happiness that prevailed without she felt what a dismal place one's own room is to pass a day in; & at last could bear it no longer, & went downstairs.

"Where are you going?" said Mrs Garland.

"For a walk to see the folks, because I am so gloomy."

"Certainly not at present Anne."

"Why not mother?" said Anne blushing with an indefinite sense of being very wicked.

"Because you must not. I have been going to tell you several times not to go into the street at this time o'day. Why not walk in the morning? — there's your Mr Derriman would be glad to —

"Don't mention him mother, don't!"

"Well then dear, walk in the garden if you must walk."

So poor Anne, who really had not the slightest wish to throw her heart away upon a soldier, but merely wanted to displace old thoughts by new, turned into the inner garden from day to day & passed a good many hours there, the pleasant birds singing to her, & the delightful butterflies alighting on her hat & the screamingly delightful ants running up her stocking. [This garden was undivided from Lonedays, the two having originally been the single garden of the whole house.

It was a quaint old place, inclosed by a thorn hedge so shapely & dense from incessant clipping that the mill boy could walk along the top without sinking in, a feat which he often performed as a means of filling out his days work. The soil within was of that intense fat blackness which is only seen after a century of constant cultivation. The paths were grassed over, so that people came & went upon them without being heard. The grass harboured slugs, & on this account the miller was going to replace it by gravel as soon as he had time; but as he had said this for thirty years without doing it, the slugs & the grass seemed likely to remain.

The miller's man attended to Mrs Garland's piece of the garden as well as to the larger portion, digging, planting & weeding indifferently in both, the miller observing with reason that it was not worth while for a helpless widow-woman to hire a man for her little plot when his man working alongside could tend it without much addition to his labour. The two households were on this account even more closely united in the garden than within the mill. Out there they were almost one family, & they talked from plot to plot with a zest & animation which Mrs Garland could never have anticipated when she first removed thither after her husband's death.

The lower half of the garden, farthest from the road, was the most sunny & sheltered part of this sunny & sheltered enclosure, & it was well-watered as the land of Lot. Three small brooks about a yard wide ran with a tinkling sound from side to side between the plots, crossing the paths under wood slabs laid as bridges, & passing out of the garden through little tunnels in the hedge. The brooks were so far overhung at their brinks by grass & garden produce that had it not been for their perpetual babbling few would have noticed that they were there. This was where Anne liked

best to linger when her excursions became restricted to her own premises; & in a spot of the garden not far removed the trumpet-major loved to linger also, whenever he visited his father's house.

Having by virtue of his office no stable duty to perform he came down from the camp to the mill almost every day; & Anne, finding that he adroitly walked & sat in his father's portion of the garden whenever she did in the other half, could not help smiling & speaking to him. So his epaulettes & blue jacket, & Anne's yellow gipsy-hat, were often seen in different parts of the garden at the same time; but he never intruded into her part of the enclosure, nor did she into Loveday's. She always spoke to him when she saw him there, & he replied in deep firm accents across the gooseberry bushes, or through the tall rows of flowering peas, as the case might be. He thus gave her accounts at fifteen paces of his experiences in camp, in quarters, in Flanders & elsewhere, of the difference between line & column, of forced marches, billeting & such like, together with his hopes of promotion. Anne listened at first indifferently, but knowing no one else so good-natured and experienced she grew interested in him as in a brother. By degrees his straps, buckles, spurs, badges & rings of brass lost all their strangeness & were as familiar to her as her own clothes.

At last Mrs Garland noticed this growing friendship, & began to despair of her motherly scheme of uniting Anne to the wealthy Festus. Why she could not take prompt steps to check interference with her plan, partly from her nature, which was the reverse of managing, & partly from a new emotional circumstance with which she found it difficult to reckon. The near neighbourhood that had produced the friendship of Anne for John Loveday was slowly effecting a warmer liking between her mother & his father.

~~to his daughter.~~

Thus the month of July passed. The troop horses came cantering with the regularity of clockwork twice a day down to drink under her windows, and as the weather grew hotter, kicked up their heels & shook their heads furiously under the maddening sting of the dun-fly. The green leaves in the garden became of a darker dye, the gooseberries ripened, & the little brooks were reduced to half their winter volume.

At length the earnest trumpet-major obtained Mrs Garland's consent to take her & her daughter to the camp, which they had not yet viewed from any closer point than their own windows. One afternoon they went, the miller being of the party. The villagers were by this time driving a roaring trade with the soldiers, who purchased of them every description of garden produce, milk, butter, & eggs, at liberal prices. The figures of these rural hustlers could be seen creeping up the slopes, laden like bees, to a spot in the rear of the camp, where there was a kind of market-place on the green-sward.

Mrs Garland & the miller came, who conducted from one place to another, & on to the quarter where the soldiers' wives lived who had not been able to get lodgings in the cottages near. The most sheltered place had been chosen for them, & huts had been built for their use by their husbands of cloth, hurdles, a little thatch, & whatever they could lay hands on. The trumpet-major conducted his friends thence to the empty large barn which had been appropriated as a hospital, & to the cottage with its windows bricked up, that was used as the magazine. Then they inspected the lines of shining dark horses (each representing the then high price of two & twenty guineas purchase-money), standing patiently at the ropes which stretched from one picket-post to another, a bank being thrown up in front of them as a protection at night.

They passed on to the tents of the German legion, a well grown & rather dandy set of men, [illegible]; but with a poetical look about their faces which

rendered them interesting to feminine eyes. Hanoverians, Saxons, Prussians, Swedes, Hungarians, & other foreigners were numbered in their ranks. They were cleaning arms, which they leant carefully against a rail when the work was complete.

On their return they passed the mess-house, a temporary wooden building with a brick chimney, where, in wet weather, the officers could spend the day if they chose. As Anne & her companions went by a group of three or four of them were standing at the door, talking to a ~~dash~~ darking young man who was expatiating on the qualities of a horse that one of the officers was inclined to buy. Anne recognised Festus Derriman in the seller, & Cripplestraw was trotting the animal up & down. As soon as she caught the yeoman's eye he left the knot of officers & came forward, making some friendly remark to the miller, & then turning to Miss Garland, who kept her eyes steadily fixed on the distant landscape till he got so near that it was impossible to do so longer. Festus looked from Anne to the trumpet-major, & from the trumpet-major back to Anne with a dark expression of ~~dash~~ face, as if he ~~dash~~ suspected that there might be a tender understanding between them

"Are you offended with me?" he said to her in a low voice of repressed resentment

"No," said Anne.

"When are you coming to the Hall again?"

"Never perhaps."

"Nonsense Anne," said Mrs Garland who had come near, & smiled pleasantly on Festus. "You can go at any time as usual."

"Let her come with me now, Mrs Garland. I should be pleased to walk along with her. My man can lead home the horse"

"Thank you, but I shall not come," said Miss Anne, coldly.

The widow looked unhappily in her daughter's face, distressed between

her desire that Anne should encourage Fortus, & her wish to consult Anne's own feelings in the matter, which she imagined to be in favour of John Loveday.

"Leave her alone, leave her alone", said Fortus, his gaze blackening - "now I think of it I am glad she can't come with me, for I am engaged with these noblemen." And he stalked away towards the officers of dragoons who were still surveying the house in various oblique directions.

Anne moved on with her mother, young Loveday silently following, & they began to ascend the hill. Mrs Garland was a woman who could not help looking round when she had passed anybody who occupied her thoughts, & she turned her head now.

"Don't, mother, it is so vulgar" said Anne hastily.

"Mr Derriman & the officers are watching us" said the widow. "Now I wonder what in the world they are doing that for?"

"It is no concern of ours" said Anne. [But Fortus at least was watching them seriously, & in spite of his engagement with the noblemen he did not take his eyes off our party till they were hidden from his sight by the roundness of the ground. Then Mrs Garland cast about her eyes again. "Well, where's Mr Loveday?" she asked.

"Father's behind," said John.

When she could do so without Anne's noticing Mrs Garland looked behind her again, & the miller, who had been waiting for the event, beckoned to her.

"I'll overtake you in a minute" she said, & went back, her colour for some inaccountable reason rising as she did so. The miller & she then came on slowly together, conversing in very low tones, & when they got to the bottom they stood still. Loveday & Anne waited for them, saying but little to each other, for the rencounter with Fortus had damped the spirits of both. At last the widow's private talk with Miller Loveday came to an end, & she hastened onward, the miller going in another direction to meet a man on business. When she reached the trumpet major & Anne she was looking very bright, & or rather flurried, & seemed sorry when Loveday now said that he must leave them & return

to the camp. They parted in their usual friendly manner, & Anne & her mother were left to walk the few remaining yards alone.

"There, I've settled it," said Mrs Garland. "Anne, what are you thinking about? I have settled in my mind that it is all right."

"What's all right?" said Anne.

"That you do not care for Derriman, & mean to encourage John Loveday. What's all the world so long as folks are happy! Child, don't take any notice of what I have said about Festus, & don't meet him any more."

"Well – what a weathercock you are, mother. Why should you say that just now?"

"It is easy to call me a weathercock," said the matron, putting on her face the look of a good woman; "but I have reasoned it out, & at last. Thank God, I have got over my ambition. The Lovedays are our true & only friends, & Mr Festus Derriman, with all his money, is nothing to us at all."

"But," said Anne, "what has made you change all of a sudden from what you have said before?"

"My feelings, & my reason, which I am thankful for."

Anne knew that her mother's sentiments were naturally so versatile that they could not be depended on for two days together; but it did not occur to her for the moment that a change had been helped on in the present case by a romantic talk between Mrs Garland & the miller. But Mrs Garland could not keep the secret long. She chatted gaily as she walked, & before they had entered the house she said, "What do you think Mr Loveday has been saying to me dear Anne?"

Anne did not know at all.

"Why, he has asked me to marry him."

End of Part III.

Our people are effected by the presence of royalty.

To explain the miller's sudden proposal it is necessary to go back to that moment in the narrative when Anne, Festus, & Mrs Garland were talking together on the down. John Loveday had fallen back so as not to interfere with a meeting in which he was so decidedly superfluous; & his father, who guessed the trumpet-major's secret, watched his face as he stood. John's face was unmistakably sad, & his eyes followed Mrs Garland's encouraging manner to Festus in a way which plainly said that every parting of her lips was tribulation to him. The miller loved his son as much as any miller, or private gentleman, could do, & he was pained to see John's gloom at such a trivial circumstance. So what did he resolve but to help John there & then by precipitating a matter which, had he himself been the only person concerned, he would have delayed for another six months.

He had long liked the society of his impulsive, tractable neighbour Mrs Garland; had mentally taken her up & pondered her fifty times in connection with the question whether it would not be for the happiness of both if she were to share his home, even though she was a little his superior in antecedents & knowledge. In fact he loved her; not tragically, but to a very creditable extent for his years; that is, next to his sons Bob & John, though he knew very well of that ploughed-ground appearance that the corners of her once handsome eyes, & that the little depression in her right cheek was not the lingering dimple that it was poetically assumed to be, but a result of the abstraction of some worn-out nether millstones within the cheek by Rootle the Weymouth man who lived by such practices on the heads of the elderly. But what of that, when he had lost two to ten each one of hers, & exceeded her in age by some eight years. To do John a service then, he quickened his designs, & put the question to her while

X. There had been a time when a Loveday thrilled her own heart;
but that was long ago, before she had thought of position or differences.

they were standing under the eyes of the younger pair.

Mrs Garland, though she had been interested in the miller for a long time, & had for a moment now & then thought on this question as far as "Suppose he should—", "If he were to—" & so on, had never thought a word further; & she was really taken by surprise when the question came. She answered with affectation that she would think over the proposal; & thus they parted.

Now her mother's infirmity of purpose set Anne thinking, & she was suddenly filled with a conviction that in such a case she ought to have some purpose herself. (Mrs Garland's complacency at the miller's offer had, in truth, amazed her.) While her mother held up her head, & recommended Festus, it had seemed a very pretty thing to rebel; but the pressure being removed an awful sense of her own responsibility took possession of her mind. As there was no longer anybody to be wise (or ambitious) for her, much she should be wise & ambitious for herself, & encourage Festus in his addresses for her own & her mother's good. To wake into cold daylight like this, when & because her mother had gone into the land of romance, was dreadful & new to her, & like an increase of years without living them.

But it was easier to think that she ought to marry the yeoman than to take steps for doing it; & she went on living just as before, only with a little more thoughtfulness in her eyes.

Two days after the visit to the camp, when she was again in the garden, Soldier Loveday said to her at a distance of five rows of beans & a parsnip bed, You have heard the news, Miss Garland?

"No," said Anne without looking up from a book she was reading.

"The King is coming to-morrow."

"The King?" She looked up then.

Yes; to Weymouth; & he will pass this way.... He can't arrive till long past the middle of the night, if what they say is true that he only reaches

Andover by supper-time," continued Loveday, encouraged by her interest to cut off the parsnip-bed from the distance between them.

Miller Loveday came round the corner of the house. "Have ye heard about the king coming, Miss maidy Anne? he said

Anne said that she had just heard of it, & the trumpet-major, who hardly welcomed his father at such a moment, explained what he knew of the matter.

"And you will go with your regiment to meet'n, I suppose? said old Loveday.

Young L. said that the men of the German Legion were to perform that duty: his regiment had nothing to do with the reception. and turning half from his father & half towards Anne he added, in a tentative tone, that he thought he might get leave for that night, if anybody would like to be taken to the top of the hill over which the cavalcade was going to pass.

Anne, knowing by this time of the budding hope in the gallant dragoon's mind & not wishing to encourage it, said "I do'nt want to go."

he said

The miller looked disappointed as well as John. "Your mother might like to?"

"Yes; I am going indoors, & I'll ask her if you wish me to. said she.

(rather coldly)

She went indoors, & told her mother of the proposal. Mrs Garland, though she had determined not to answer the miller's question, on matrimony which yet, was quite ready for this jaunt, (in spite of Anne) & she sailed off at once to the garden to hear more about it. When she re-entered she said Anne, ~~[illegible]~~; "I have not seen the king or the king's horses for these many years, & I am going.

~~[illegible]~~

"Ah – it is well to be you, mother" said Anne in an elderly tone.

~~[illegible]~~

"Then you won't come with us?" said Mrs Garland, rather rebuffed.

~~[illegible]~~

"~~[illegible]~~

~~[illegible]~~

I have very different things to think of, said her daughter with virtuous emphasis, "than going to see sights at that time of night."

~~[illegible]~~

Mrs Garland was sorry, but resolved to adhere to the arrangement. So

the night came on; & it having gone abroad that the King would pass by the road many of the villagers went out to see the cavalcade. When the two Lovedays & Mrs Garland were gone Anne bolted the door for security. and sat down, to think again on her grave responsibilities in the choice of a husband, now that her natural guardian could no longer be trusted.

A knock came to the door. Anne's instinct was at once to lie silent, that the comer might think the family had retired.

The knocker, however, was not to be easily persuaded. He had in fact seen rays of light over the top of the shutter, & unable to get an answer, went on to the door of the mill, which was still going, the miller sometimes grinding all night when busy. The grinder accompanied the stranger to Mrs Garland's door.

"The daughter is certainly at home," said the grinder. "I'll go round to t'other side, & see if she's there, Master Derriman."

"I want to take her out to see the King," said Festus.

Anne had started at the sound of the voice. No opportunity could have been better for carrying out her new conviction on the disposal of her hand. But in her mortal dislike of Festus Anne forgot her principles, & her idea of keeping herself above the Lovedays, & blowing out the candle, slipped out at the back door & hastily followed in the direction that her mother & the rest had taken. She overtook them as they were beginning to climb the hill.

"What — you have altered your mind after all?" said the widow. "How came you to do that, my dear?"

"I thought I might as well come", said Anne.

"To be sure you did", said the miller heartily. "a good deal better than biding at home there".

John said nothing, though she could almost see through the gloom how glad he was that she had altered her mind. When they reached the ridge over which the highway stretched they found many of their neighbours

who had got there before them
~~stretched~~ ~~reposed~~ ~~their~~ ~~neighbours~~ idling on the grass border between the roadway & the hedge, enjoying a sort of midnight picnic, which it was easy to do, the air being still & dry. Some carriages were also standing near, though most people of the district who possessed four wheels, or even two, had driven to Weymouth to await the king there. From this height could be seen in the distance the position of the town, an additional number of lamps, lanterns, & candles having been lit to-night by the Burghers Royal, to grace the royal entry, if it should occur before dawn.

Mrs Garland touched Anne's elbow several times as they walked, & the young woman at last understood that this was meant as a hint to her to take the trumpet-major's arm, which its owner was rather suggesting than offering to her. Anne wondered what infatuation was possessing her mother, declined to take the arm, & contrived to get in front with the miller, who mostly kept in the van to guide the others' footsteps. The trumpet-major was left with Mrs Garland, & Anne ~~encouraging~~ encouraging pursuit of them induced him to say a few words to the young.

"By your leave, ma'am, I'll speak to you on something that concerns my mind very much indeed?"

"Certainly."

"It is my wish to be allowed to pay my addresses to your daughter."

"I thought you meant that," said Mrs Garland simply.

"And you'll not object?"

"I shall leave it to her. I don't think she will agree, even if I do."

The soldier sighed, & seemed helpless. "Well, I can but ask her," he said.

The spot on which they had finally chosen to wait for the king was by a field-gate whence the white road could be seen for a long distance northwards. They lingered & lingered; but no king came to break the silence of that beautiful summer night. As half-hour after half-hour glided by, & nobody came, Anne began to get weary; ~~and~~ she knew & regretted the reason. why her mother did not propose to go back. She would have preferred it lonely, but that Mrs Garland seemed so cheerful, & as wide awake as at noonday, so that it was almost a cruelty to disturb her.

The trumpet-major at last made up his mind, & tried to draw Anne into a private conversation. The feeling which a week ago had been a vague & piquant aspiration was to-day altogether too lively for the reasoning of this warm-hearted soldier to regulate. So he persevered in his intention to catch her alone; & at last, in spite of her manœuvres to the contrary, he succeeded. The miller & Mrs Garland had walked about fifty yards further on, & Anne & himself were left standing by the gate.

But the gallant musician's soul was so much disturbed by tender vibrations & by the sense of his presumption, that he could not begin; & it may be questioned if he would ever have broached the subject at all, had not a distant church clock opportunely assisted him by striking the hour of three. The trumpet-major heaved a breath of relief.

"That clock strikes in G sharp", he said.

"Indeed – G sharp?" said Anne civilly

"Yes, alto. 'Tis a fine-toned bell. I used to notice that note when I was a boy.

"Did you – the very same?"

Yes. And since then I had a wager about that bell with the bandmaster of the North Wessex Militia. He said the note was G. I said it was A. When we found it was G sharp we didn't know how to settle it."

"It is not a deep note for a clock."

"Oh, no. The finest tenor bell about here is the bell of Peter's, Dorchester – in E flat. That's the note – tum-m-m-m. (from far down his throat) – Tum-m-m-m-m. The trumpet-major sounded what he considered to be E flat with a parenthetic sense of luxury unquenchable even by his present distraction.

"Shall we go on to where my mother is?" said Anne, less impressed by the beauty of the note than he himself.

"In one minute, he said tremulously. Talking of music – I fear you don't think the rank of a trumpet-major much to compare with your own?"

"I do. I think a trumpet-major a very respectable man."

"I am glad to hear you say that. It is given out by the King's command that trumpet-majors are to be considered respectable".

"Indeed. Then I am ~~undoubtedly~~ by chance more loyal than I ~~appeared~~ thought for."

"I get a good deal a year extra to the trumpeters, because of my position."

"That's very nice."

"And I am not supposed ever to drink with the trumpeters who serve beneath me".

"Naturally."

"And, by the orders of the war-office, I am to exert over them (that's the government word) ~~fear~~ exert over them full authority; & if any one behaves towards me with the least impropriety, or neglects my orders, he is to be confined & reported."

"It is really a dignified post" she said, with, however, a reserve of ~~enthusiasm~~ enthusi-asm which was not altogether encouraging.

"And of course someday I shall — stammered ~~the subtle~~ the dragoon ~~someday~~ — shall be in rather a better position than I am at present."

"I am glad to hear it, Mr Loveday"

And in short, ~~Mistress Anne~~ Mistress Ayne" continued J.L. bravely & desperately "may I pray count to you in the hope that — no, no, don't go away! — you haven't heard yet — that you may make me the happiest of men; not yet, but when peace is proclaimed, & all is ~~quiet~~ smooth & easy again. I can't put it any better, though there's more to be explained."

"This is most awkward," said Anne evidently with pain. "I cannot possibly agree, believe me, Mr Loveday, I cannot."

But there's more than this. You would be surprised — to see what snug ~~rooms~~ rooms the married trumpet- & sergeant-majors have in quarters.

"Barracks are not all: consider camp, & war."

"That brings me to my strong point." exclaimed the soldier hopefully. My father is better off than most non-commissioned officers fathers; & there's always a home for you at his house in any emergency. I can tell you privately that he has enough to keep us ~~one~~ both, and if you would rather live at barracks, well, peace once established, I'd live at home as a miller & farmer — ~~farmer~~ — next door to you on our roth."

"My mother would be sure to object," expostulated Anne

"No — my father has asked her to do the same thing" "She'll refuse him probably; & then

she will make me refuse you."

"No – she leaves it all to you."

"What, you have asked her?" said Anna with surprise.

"Yes. I thought it would not be honourable (with a generous) to act otherwise"

"That's very good of you," said Anna, her face warming at the sense of his straightforwardness "But my mother is so entirely ignorant of a soldiers life, & the life of a soldiers wife; she is so simple on all such matters that I cannot listen to you any more readily for what she may say.

"Then it is all over for me?" said the poor trumpet-major, wiping his face & putting away his handkerchief with an air of finality.

Anna was silent. Any woman who has ever tried will know without explanation what an unpalateable task it is to dismiss, even when she does not love him, a man who has all the natural & moral qualities she would desire, & only fails in the social. Would-be lovers are not so numerous, even with the best of women, that the sacrifice of one can be felt as other than a good thing wasted in a world where there are few good things.

"You are not angry, Miss Garland?" said he, finding that she did not speak.

"O no. Don't let us say anything more about this now." and she moved on.

[illegible]. [When she drew near to the miller & her mother she perceived that they were engaged in a conversation of that peculiar kind which is all the more full & communicative from the fact of its definite words being few. In short, here the game was succeeding which with herself had failed. It was pretty clear from the symptoms, marks, tokens, telegraphs, & general by-play between widower & widow that Miller Loveday must have said to Mrs Garland some such thing as he had said before – with what result again this time she did not know. [illegible]

As the situation was delicate, Anne halted awhile apart from them. The trumpet-major, quite ignorant of how his cause was entered into by the white-coated man in the distance (for his father had not yet told him of his designs upon Mrs Garland) did not advance, ~~with them~~, but stood still by the gate, (waiting till he should be called up. ~~by her~~) as though he were attending a princess. Thus they lingered, & the day began to break. Mrs Garland & the miller took no heed of the time, & what it was bringing to earth & sky, so occupied were they with themselves; but Anne in her place, & the trumpet-major in his, each in private thought of no bright kind, watched the gradual glory of the east through all its tones & changes. The world of birds & insects got lively, the blue & yellow & the burnished brass of Loveday's uniform again became distinct: the sun bored its way upward, the fields, the trees, & the distant landscape kindled to flame, & the trumpet-major, backed by a lilac shadow as tall as a steeple, blazed in the rays like a very god of war.

It was half-past three o'clock. A short time after a rattle of horses & wheels reached their ears from the quarter in which they gazed, & there appeared upon the white line of road a moving mass, which presently ascended the hill, & drew near.

Then there arose a huzza from the few knots of watchers gathered here, & they cried "Long live King George!" The cavalcade passed ahead. It consisted of three travelling-carriages escorted by a detachment of the German Legion. Anne was told to look in the first carriage – a post chaise drawn by four horses – for the King & queen; & was rewarded by seeing a profile resembling that of the eminent coin of the realm; but as the party had been travelling all night, & the spectators here gathered were few & homely, none of the royal family looked out of the carriage windows. It was said that the two elder princesses were in the same carriage, but they remained invisible.

a coach & four.
The next vehicle, contained more princesses, & the third some of their attendants.

"Thank God, I have seen my king," said Mrs Garland, when they had all gone by.

Nobody else expressed any thankfulness, & one old man said grimly that of dusty old leather coaches sights were not worth waiting for. Anne looked hither & thither in the bright rays of the day, each of her eyes having a little sun in it, which gave her glance a peculiar golden fire, & kindled the brown curls grouped over her forehead to a yellow brilliancy, & made single hairs blaze astray by the right, like lacquered wires. She was wondering if Festus were anywhere near; but she could not see him.

Before they left the ridge they turned their attention towards Weymouth, which was visible at this place only as a portion of the sea-shore from which the night mist was rolling slowly back. The sea beyond was still wrapped in summer fog; the ships in the roads showing thro' it as black specks suspended in the air. While they looked & walked a white jet of smoke burst from a spot which the guide knew to be the battery in front of the king's residence; & then the report of guns reached their ears. This announcement was answered by a salute from Portland Castle, & the ships in the neighbouring anchorage. All the bells in the town began ringing. The king & his family had arrived.

[Space]

During the whole of that day travelling carriages of all kinds & colours climbed & descended the road over the hill that led towards Weymouth. Some contained those personages of the King's suite who had not kept pace with him in his journey from Windsor; others were the coaches of aristocracy big & little (to whom news of the king's arrival drew visitors for their own pleasure) so that the highway as seen from the hills about Overcombe appeared like an ant-walk, a constant succession of dark spots creeping continuously along its surface at nearly uniform rates of progress, & all in one direction.

Anne, who had all that romantic interest in court people & pageantry natural to an imaginative girl of her tastes, frequently bent her eyes on this microscopic spectacle road from the field near the front of her house, & allowed her fancy

to paint the portraits & histories of those who moved therein. That speck was a coach, perchance full of ladies of resplendent charms, leading fairy lives in some gorgeous palace, & accustomed to walk in gardens of bewildering beauty. Those rattling dots of horsemen were perhaps gallant nobles & knights who had the privilege of jesting with kings, that figure on the horizon about the size of a pin's head was perhaps composed throughout of royal blood. That, as a matter of fact the several coaches contained the elderly countess of A—, of placid nature, the plain features, & dowdy dress; the virtuous & homely Lady B—; the strange-tempered Marchioness of C—, & so on: that the horsemen were puffy red-faced General D—, a couple of grey & bald-headed colonels, a diplomatist, & numbers of commonplace attendants on the court, make no difference whatever to the transcendency of her mental impressions.

Chapter XII.

How everybody great & small climbed to the top of the down.

As the days went on, echoes of the life & bustle of Weymouth reached the ears of the quiet people in Overcombe hollow, exciting & moving those unimportant natives as a ground swell moves the weeds in a cave. The traffic & intelligence between camp & town passed in a measure over their heads. It being summer time the miller was much occupied with business, & the trumpet major was too constantly employed in marching between the camp & Gloucester Lodge with the rest of the dragoons to bring his friends any news for some time. [At last he sent a message that there was to be a review on the down by the king, & that it was fixed for the day following. This information soon spread through the village & county round, & next morning the whole population of Overcombe except two or three very old men & women, a few babies & their nurses, a cripple, & Corporal Tullidge, ascended the slope like a flock of sheep & awaited the events of the day.

The miller wore his best coat on this occasion, which meant a good deal. An Overcombe man in those days would have a best coat, & keep it as a best coat half his life. The miller's had been five-& twenty summers more or less through the chinks of a dresser-box, & was not at all shabby as yet, though getting singular. But that

could not be helped; common coats & best coats were a distinct species, & never interchangeable. Living so near the scene of the review he walked up the hill, accompanied by Mrs Garland & Anne as usual.

It was a clear day, with little wind stirring, & the view from the downs, one of the most extensive in the county, was unclouded. The eye of any observer who cared for such things swept over Weymouth, & Dead man's Bay beyond, & Portland, lying on the sea to the left of those, like a great crouching animal tethered to the mainland. On the extreme east of the marine horizon Saint Albans Head closed the scene, the sea to the southward of that point glaring like a mirror under the sun. Inland could be seen Badbury Rings, where a beacon had been recently erected, & further to the left Bulbarrow, where another beacon stood. Not far from this came Nettlecombe Tout; to the west Dogbery Hill; & further Black'on, near to the foreground, where there was yet another beacon built of furze faggots thatched with straw, & standing on the spot where the [illegible] monument now raises its head.

At nine o'clock the troops marched upon the ground; some from the camps in the vicinity, & some from quarters in the different towns round about. The approaches to the down were blocked with carriages of all descriptions, ages, & colours, & with pedestrians of every class. At ten the royal personages on the hill were said to be drawing near, & soon after the King, accompanied by the Dukes of Cambridge & Cumberland, & a couple of generals, appeared on horseback, wearing a round hat turned up at the side, with a cockade & military feather. (Sensation among the crowd). Then the Queen & three of the princesses entered the field, in a great coach drawn by six beautiful cream-coloured horses. Another coach, with four horses of the same sort brought the two remaining princesses. (Confused acclamations, "There's King Jarge!" "That's Queen Charlett!" "[illegible] Princess Lizabeth!" "Princess Sophier & Meelyer!" &c &c, from the surrounding spectators)

Anne & her party were fortunate enough to secure a position on the top of one of the barrows which rose here & there on the down; & the miller having gallantly constructed a little cairn of flints he placed the two women thereon, by which means they were enabled to see over the heads, horses, & coaches of the multitudes below & around. At the march-past, the miller's eye, which had been wandering about for the purpose, discovered his son in his place by the trumpeters, who had moved forward in two ranks, & were sounding the march. "That's John!" he cried to the widow. "His trumpet-sling is of two colours, d'ye see; & the others be plain."

Mrs Garland too saw him now, & enthusiastically admired him, from her hands upwards; & Anne silently did the same. But before the young woman's eyes had quite left the trumpeter major they fell upon the figure of Yeoman Festus riding with his troop, apparently to mark the ground & keeping his face at a medium between haughtiness & mere bravery? on the other side. He certainly looked as soldierly as any of his own corps, & felt more soldierly than half a dozen, as anybody could see by observing him. Anne got behind the miller in case Festus should discover her & rush upon her in a regardless of his monarch, in a rage with, "Why the deuce did you run away from me that night, (hey) Madam?" But she resolved to think no more of him ~~at all~~ just now, & to seek to Loveday, who was her mother's friend. In this she was helped by the stirring tones which burst from the latter gentleman & his subordinates from time to time.

"Well," said the miller complacently, "there's few of more consequence in the regiment than the a trumpeter. He's the chap that tells 'em what to do, after all. Hey, Widow Garland?"

"So he is, miller," said she.

"They could no more do without Jack & his gang than they could without generals."

"Indeed they could not," said Mrs Garland again, in a tone of pleasant agreement with anyone in Great Britain or Ireland.

It was said that the line that day was three miles long, reaching from the high ground on the right of where the people stood to the turnpike road on the left. After the review came a sham fight, during which action the crowd dispersed more widely over the downs, enabling Widow Garland to get still clearer glimpses of her king, & his handsome charger, & the head of the Queen, & the

elbows & shoulders of the Princesses in the carriages, & fractional parts of General Garth & the Duke of Cumberland; which sights gave her great gratification. She tugged at her daughter at every opportunity exclaiming, "Now you can see his feather." "There's her hat." "There's her majesty's India muslin shawl" in a minor form of ecstasy that made the miller think her more girlish & animated than her daughter Anne.

Meanwhile in the part of the field where ~~the yeoman~~ was elbowing his way along, he saw from the base of the barrow Mr Loveday, a backward brimmed tradesman, ~~at the base of the barrow~~ beckoning up to attract his attention. Loveday went halfway down, & the other came as near as he could.

"~~Miller~~ Miller", ~~he~~ said the man, "a letter has been lying at the Post-office for you for the last three days. If I had known that I should see ye here I'd have brought it along with me."

Loveday returning to the summit.

The miller thanked him for the news, & they parted. "What a very strange thing" ~~said Loveday~~ he said to Mrs Garland, who had looked inquiringly at his now very grave face. "That was Weymouth postmaster, & he says there's a letter for me.. Ah, I now call to mind that there was a letter in the candle three days ago this very night – a large red one; but foolish-like I thought nothing o't.... Who can that letter be from!"

Even of the miller's respectable standing,

A letter at this time was such an event for hamleteers that Loveday thenceforward was thrown into a fit of abstraction which prevented his seeing any more of the sham fight, or the people, or the king. Mrs Garland imbibed some of his concern, and suggested that it might come from his son William Robert.

"I should naturally have thought that," said the miller Loveday. But he wrote

elbows & shoulders of the Princesses in the carriages, & fractional parts of General Garth & the Duke of Cumberland; which sights gave her great gratification. She tugged at her daughter at every opportunity exclaiming, "Now you can see his feather." "There's her hat." "There's her majesty's India muslin shawl" in a minor form of ecstasy that made me wonder think her more girlish & animated than her daughter Anne.

In those military manoeuvres, the miller followed the fortunes of one man; Anne Garland of two. The spectators who, unlike our party, had no personal interest in the soldiery, saw only troops & battalions in the concrete – straight lines of red, straight lines of blue; white lines formed of immmeralle knee breeches, black lines formed of many gaiters, coming & going in kaleidoscopic change. Who Anne thought of every point in the line as an isolated man, each dwelling all to himself in the hermitage of his own mind? One person did, a young man, far removed from the barrow & where the Garlands & Miller Loveday stood. The natural expression of his face was somewhat obscured by the bronzing effects of rough weather, but the lines of his mouth showed that affectionate impulses were – perhaps stronger than judgment well could regulate. strong within him. He wore a blue jacket with little brass buttons, & was plainly a seafaring man.

Meanwhile, in the part of the plain where rose the tumulus on which the miller had established himself, a broad-brimmed tradesman was elbowing his way along, & from the base of the barrow saw Mr Loveday, & beckoned to attract his attention. Loveday went halfway down, & the other came up as near as he could.

"Miller", said the man. "a letter has been lying at the Post-Office for you for the last three days. If I had known that I should see ye here I'd have brought it along with me."

Loveday returning to the summit.

The miller thanked him for the news, & they parted. "What a very strange thing" he said to Mrs Garland, who had looked inquiringly at his now very grave fall. "That was Weymouth postmaster, & he says here's a letter for me.. ah, I now call to mind that there was a letter in the candle three days ago this very night – a large red one; but foolish-like I thought nothing o't.... Who can that letter be from!"

A letter at this time was such an event for hamleteers, that Loveday thenceforward was thrown into a fit of abstraction which prevented his seeing any more of the sham fight, or the people, or the king. Mrs Garland imbibed some of his concern, and suggested that the letter might come from his son William Robert.

"I should naturally have thought that," said Miller Loveday. But he wrote

※ They listened to a man who was offering one guinea to receive ten in case Bonaparte should be killed in three months, & to other entertainments of that nature, which at this time were not rare.

to me only two months ago, & his brother John heard from him within the last four weeks, when he was just about starting on another voyage..... If you'll pardon me Miss Garland, ma'am, I'll see if there's any overcome man here who is going to Weymouth to day, so that I may get the letter by night time. I cannot possibly go myself."

So Mr. Loveday left them for awhile; & as they were so near home Mrs. Garland did not wait for him to come back, but walked about on the barrow with Anne a little time, until they should be disposed to trot down the slope to their own door. Three during their perambulation their eyes followed the sailor before-mentioned, & he fell upon Anne; & he glanced over her, & passed her upheeding by. Loveday the elder was at this time on the other side of the line, looking for a messenger to Weymouth. At twelve o'clock the review was over, & the king & his family left the hill. The troops then cleared off the field, the spectators followed, & by one o'clock the downs were again bare.

They still spread their grassy surface to the sun as on that beautiful morning long ago; but the king & his fifteen thousand armed men, the horses, the bands of music, the princesses, the queen-colored teams — the gorgeous centre-piece in short to which the downs were but the mere mount or margin — have been dead & gone for years & years; lying scattered about the world as military & royal dust — some at Talavera Albuera, Salamanca, Victoria, Toulouse & Waterloo; some in home church-yards; & a few small handfuls in a royal vault.

In the afternoon John Loveday, lightened of his trumpet & trappings, appeared at the old manor-house door, & beheld Anne standing at hers.

"I saw you, Anne Garland", said the soldier gaily.

"Where was I?" said she smiling.

"On the top of the big mound — to the right of the king".

"And I saw you — lots of times"; she rejoined.

Loveday seemed pleased. "Did you really take the trouble to find me? That was very good of you."

"Her eyes followed you everywhere," said Mrs Garland from an upper window.

"Of course I looked at the dragoons most," said Anne, discomposed. And then I looked at them ~~my~~ eyes naturally fell upon the trumpets. I looked at the dragoons generally, no more."

She did not mean to show any repulsion to the trumpet-major, but he fancied otherwise, & blood repressed. ~~wondering spirit on the Captain's cheek~~ ~~he looked but his eyes fell so naturally upon the I to~~ the mind may did.

The situation was relieved by the arrival of the Miller, still looking serious.

"I am very much concerned, John. I did not go to the review for nothing. There's a letter waiting for me at Weymouth, & I must get it before bed-time, or I shant sleep a wink."

"I'll go, of course," said John. "And perhaps Miss Garland would like to see what's doing there to-day? Everybody is gone, or going; the road is like a fair."

He spoke pleadingly, but Anne was not won to assent, though she wanted to go.

"You can drive in the gig; 'twill do Blossom good; he's getting fresh & wants exercise," said the miller.

"Let David drive Miss Garland," said the trumpet-major, not wishing to coerce her. "I would just as soon walk".

a time was fixed for the start.

~~Miss was the~~ Anne joyfully welcomed this arrangement. & at

Chapter XIII [The conversation in the crowd.

In the afternoon they drove off; John Loveday being nowhere visible. All along the road they passed & were overtaken by vehicles of all descriptions, going in the same direction; among them the extraordinary machines which had been invented for the conveyance of troops to any point of the coast on which the enemy should land: they consisted of some boards placed across a sort of trolley, thirty men of the Dorchester volunteers companies riding on each.

The borough was in a panoply of gaiety. Weymouth town was quite overrun by Weymouth district & country round, much to the town's delight & profit.

~~It was about six o'clock~~ The fear of invasion was such that six frigates lay in the roads to insure the safety of the royal family, & from the regiments of horse & foot quartered at the barracks, or encamped on the hills round about, a picquet of a thousand men mounted every day in front of Gloucester Lodge where the king resided. When Anne & her attendant reached this point, which they did on foot, stabling the horse on the outskirts of the town, it was about six o'clock. The king was on the Esplanade, & the soldiers were just marching past to mount guard. The band ~~had~~ formed in front of the king, & all the officers saluted as they went by. [Anne now felt herself close to & looking into the stream of recorded history, within whose banks the littlest things are great, & outside which she & the general bulk of the human race were content to live on as an unreckoned, unheeded superfluity.

When she turned from her interested gaze at this scene, there stood John Loveday. She had had a presentiment that he would turn up in this mysterious way. It was marvellous that he could have got there so quickly; but there he was – not looking at the king, or at the crowd, but waiting for the turn of her head.

"~~Trumpet-major~~, I didn't see you," said Anne demurely. "How is it that your regiment is not marching past?"

"We take it by turns, ~~Anne~~, & it is not our turn", said ~~John~~ Loveday.

She wanted to know then if they were afraid that the king would be carried off by the First Consul. "Yes, Loveday told her; the king's majesty was rather venturesome. A day or two before the ~~king~~ majesty had gone so far to sea that he was nearly caught by some of the enemy's cruizers. "He is anxious to fight Bonny single-handed" he said.

"What a good brave king!" said Anne ~~Queen~~.

Loveday seemed anxious to come to more personal matters.

"Will you let me take you round to the other side where you can see

letter?" he asked. "The Queen & the Princesses are at the window,"

Anne passively assented. "David, wait here for me," she said. "I shall be back again in a few minutes." The trumpet major then led her off triumphantly, & they skirted the crowd & came round on the side towards the sands. He told her everything he could think of, military & civil, to which Anne returned pretty syllables, & parenthetic words about the colour of the sea & the curl of the foam, a way of speaking that moved the soldier's heart even more than long, direct speeches would have done.

"And that other thing I asked you?" he ventured to say at last.

"We won't speak of it."

"You don't dislike me?"

"O no," she said, gazing at the bathing machines, [illegible] digging children & other common objects of the sea shore, as if her interest lay there rather than with him.

"But I am not worthy of the daughter of a gentlemen gentleel professional man – that's what you mean?"

"There's something more than worthiness required in such cases, you know," she said, still without calling her mind away from surrounding scenes. "Ah, there's the Queen & Princesses at the window!"

"Something more?"

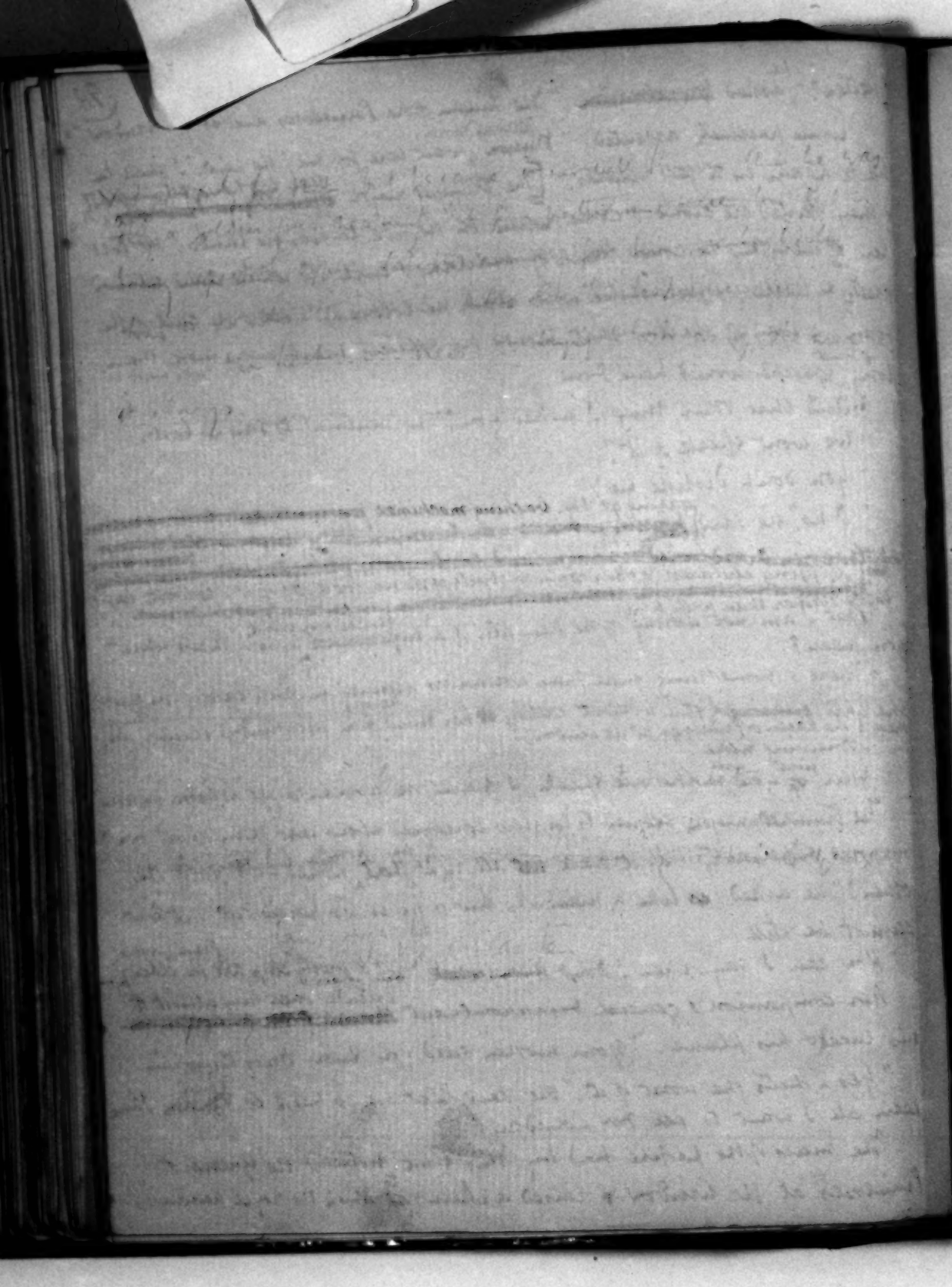
"Well, since you will make me speak, I mean the woman ought to love the man."

The trumpet-major seemed to be less concerned about this than about her supposed superiority. "If it were all right in point, that, would you mind the other?" he asked, as like a man who knows he is too persistent, yet who cannot be still.

"How can I say, when I don't know?" What a pretty chip hat the Princesses wear! Her companion's general disappointment extended over him almost to his lace & his plume. "Your mother said, you know, Miss Anne –"

"Yes – that's the worst of it," she said. "Let us go back to David. I have seen all I want to see, Mr Loveday."

The mass of the people had by this time noticed the Queen & Princesses at the window, & raised a cheer, to which the royal personages



waved their embroidered handkerchiefs. Anne went back towards the pavement with her trumpet-major, whom all the girls envied her, so fine-looking a soldier was he; & not only for that, but because it was well known that he was not a soldier from necessity but from patriotism, his father having repeatedly offered to set him up in business; but his artistic taste in plastering a horse & uniform to a dirty rumbling flour-mill was despised by all. She too had a very nice appearance in her best clothes as she walked along trying to look as if she wore them always – the sarsenet hat, muslin shawl, & light-sleeved gown being of the newest Overcombe fashion, that was only about five years old in Weymouth, & in Paris about eight or ten. She could not be harsh to Loveday & dismiss him curtly, for his musical pursuits had refined him, & made him quite poetical. Today he had been particularly well-mannered & tender. So instead of answering, "Never speak to me like this again" she merely put him off with a "Let us go back to David".

When they reached the place where they had left him David was gone.

Anne was now positively vexed. "What shall I do!" she said.

"He's only gone to drink the King's health" said Loveday, who had privately given him the money for performing that operation. "Depend upon it he'll be back soon."

"Will you go & find him?" said she with intense propriety in her looks & tone.

"I will" said Loveday reluctantly; & he went.

Anne stood still. She could now escape her gallant friend, for although the distance was long it was not impossible to walk home. On the other hand Loveday was a good & sincere fellow for whom she had almost a brotherly feeling, & she shrank from such a trick. While she stood & mused, scarcely heeding the music, the marching of the soldiers, the king, the dukes, the brilliant staff, the attendants, & the happy groups of people, her eyes fell upon the ground.

Before her she saw a flower lying – a crimson sweet-william – fresh & unmingled.

An instinctive wish to save it from destruction by the passengers' feet led her to pick it up; & then, moved by a sudden self-consciousness, she looked around. She was standing before ~~the largest hotel in Casterbridge~~ an inn, & from an upper window Festus Derriman was leaning with two or three kindred spirits of his cut & kind. He nodded eagerly, & signified to her that he had thrown the flower.

What should she do? To throw it away would seem stupid, & to keep it was awkward. She held it between her finger & thumb, twirled it round on its axis, & twirled it back again, regarding & yet not examining it. Just then she saw the trumpet-major coming back

"I can't find David anywhere", he said; & his heart was not sorry as he said it.

Anne was still holding out the sweet-william as if about to drop it; & scarcely knowing what she did under the distressing sense that she was watched, she offered the flower to Loveday.

His face brightened with pleasure as he took it. "Thank you indeed," he said. Then Anne saw what a misleading blunder she had committed towards Loveday in playing to the yeoman. Perhaps she had sown the seeds of a quarrel. "It was not my sweet-william", she said hastily. "It was lying on the ground. I don't mean anything by giving it to you."

"But I'll keep it all the same" said the innocent soldier, as if he knew a good deal about womankind; and he put the flower carefully inside his jacket, between his white waistcoat & his heart. Festus, seeing this, enlarged himself wrathfully, got hot in the face, & rose to his feet, & glared down upon them like a turnip-lantern.

"Let us go away", said Anne timorously. "I must go home now — I'll walk."

"I'll see you safe to your own door, depend upon me," said Loveday. "But — I had near forgot. Here's father's letter that he's so anxious waiting for! Will you come with me to the Post-Office? Then I'll take you straight home."

Anne, expecting Festus to pounce down every minute, was glad to be off anywhere;

so she accepted the suggestion; & they went along the parade together.

Loveday set this down as a proof of Anne's relenting. Thus in joyful spirits he entered the office, paid the postage, & received his father's letter.

"It is from Bob after all," he said. "Father told me to read it at once, in case of bad news." (He broke the seal & read, Anne standing silently by. ask your pardon for keeping you a moment")

"He is coming home to be married," said the trumpet-major, without looking up.

Anne did not answer. The blood swept impetuously up her face at his words, & as suddenly went away again, leaving her rather paler than before. She disguised her agitation, & then overcame it, Loveday observing nothing of this emotional performance.

"As far as I can understand he will be here Saturday," he said.

"Indeed," said Anne quite calmly. "And who – is he going to marry?"

"That I don't know," said John turning the letter about. "He woman is a stranger"..... Now shall we walk up the street again?"

At this moment the miller entered the office hastily, & seeing John next across to him, in his earnestness abstaining from anything like a general glance round. "Come John, I have been waiting & waiting for that there letter till I was nigh crazy."

"It is only from Robert," said the trumpet-major; & his father took the letter & read.

"To be married!.... Still, it is no such bad news as I thought. Why have ye been so long, John? There have I been thinking perhaps 'tis this, & perhaps 'tis that, & at last could do no otherwise than follow ye."

John was very sorry, & replied, in rather lame tones that they had been looking at the king; while the miller took off his hat & wiped the exact line where his forehead joined this hair, saying that since 'twas as 'twas it did not matter, & that he must get home again at once, & read the letter over quiet to himself & so get more of the true sense of it than he could in this noisy place & thank what was to be done.

Anne had been very glad to see John's father, for it relieved her

of her difficulty in getting home; & it was arranged that as David was nowhere to be found she should take the spare seat beside Mr Loveday.

They walked up the street, leaving John to return alone. The miller was so absorbed in his mental perspective of Bob's arrival that he saw nothing of the gaieties they passed through; & Anne flung a fearless look towards the inn occupied by Festus & his friends as she marched past it, fortified by the miller.

Chapter XIV.

Later in the evening of the same day.

When they reached home the sun was going down. It had already been noised abroad that Miller Loveday had received a letter, & his cart having been heard coming up the lane, the population of Overcombe drew down towards the mill as soon as he had gone indoors — a sudden flash of brightness from the window showing that he had struck such an early light, as immediate nothing but the deciphering of literature could require. A letter was a matter of public moment, & everybody in the parish had an interest in the reading of more rare documents; so that when the miller had placed the candle, slanted himself, & called in Mrs Garland to have her opinion on the meaning of any hieroglyphic that he might encounter in his course, he found that he was to be additionally assisted by the opinions of the other neighbours, whose persons appeared in the doorway, partly covering each other like a hand of cards, yet each showing a large enough piece of himself for identification. To pass the time while they were arranging themselves the miller adopted his usual way of filling up casual intervals, that of snuffing the candle.

"We heard you had got a letter," they said, "Maister Loveday."

"Yes, Southampton, the twelfth of August dear father," said Loveday; &

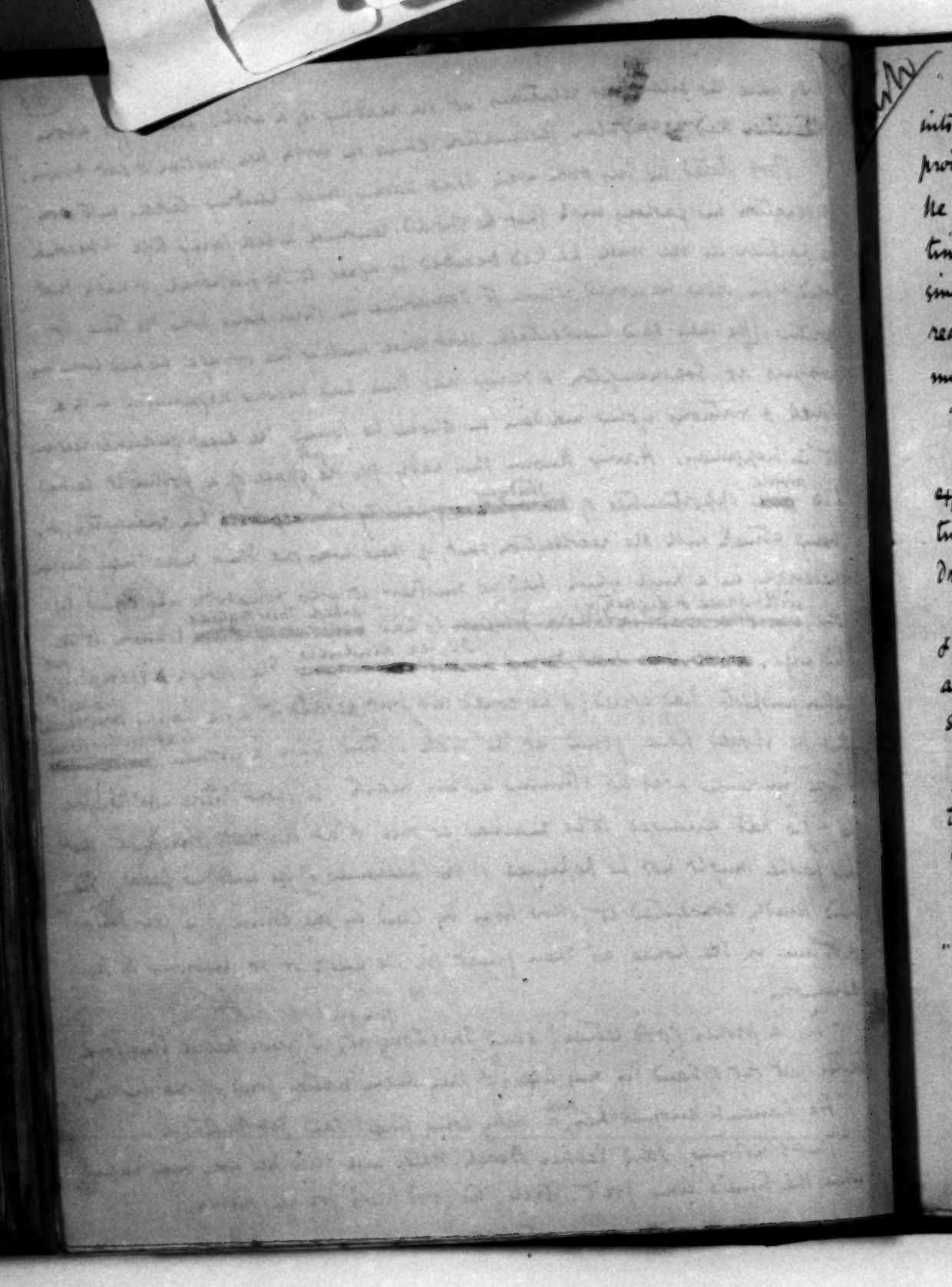
they were as silent as relations at the reading of a will. Anne, for whom the letter had a singular fascination, came in with her mother & sat down.

Bob stated in his own way that having, since landing, taken into consideration his father's wish that he should renounce a sea-faring life & become a partner in the mill, he had decided to agree to the proposal; & with that object in view he would return to Overcombe in three days from the time of writing. [He then said incidentally that since making his voyage he had been in lodgings at Southampton & during that time had become acquainted with a lovely & virtuous young maiden in whom he found the finest qualities necessary to his happiness. Having known this lady for the space of a fortnight he had had ample full opportunities of studying her character, & being struck with the recollection that if there was one thing more than another necessary in a mill which had no mistress, it was somebody who could be one, with grace & dignity, he had asked Miss Matilda Johnson to be his wife. In her kindness for She, though sacrificing her better prospects, had agreed; & he could not but regard it as a happy chance that he should have found at the mill of Time such a woman to adorn his home whose innocence was as stunning as her beauty. Without more ado therefore he & she had arranged to be married at once, & at Overcombe, that his father might not be deprived of the pleasures of the wedding feast. She had kindly consented to follow him by land in the course of a few days, & to live in the house as their guest for the week or so previous to the ceremony.

"'Tis a proper good letter," said Mrs Comfort from the background. "I never heard true love better put out of hand in my life; & they seem 'nation fond of one another."

"He hasn't known her such a very long time," said Job Mitchell.

"That's nothing," said Esther Beach. "Nater will find her way very rapid when the time's come for't. Well, 'tis good news for ye, miller."



"Yes, sure, I hope 'tis", said Loveday. But he showed no such great hurry to burst into the frantic form of fatherly joy which the event should naturally have produced, & seemed more disposed to let it off by examining thoroughly into this feeling the fibres of the letter-paper. "I was five years a courting my wife", he presently continued. But folks were slower about everything in them days.... Well, since she's coming we must make her welcome. Did any of ye catch by my reading which day it is he means? What with making out the penmanship my mind was drawn off from the sense here & there."

"He says in three days" said Mrs Garland. "The date of the letter will fix it."

On examination it was found that the day appointed was the one nearly arrived; at which the miller jumped up & said, "Then he'll be here before bedtime – I did n't gather till now that he was coming afore Saturday. Why, he may drop in this very minute!"

He had hardly spoken when footsteps were heard coming along the front; & they presently halted at the door. Loveday pushed through the neighbours & rushed out; & seeing in the passage a form which obscured the declining light, the miller seized hold of him, saying "Ah, my dear Bob – then you be come!"

"Scrounch it all, miller, don't quite pull my poor shoulder out of joint! whatever is the matter?" said the newcomer. It was Uncle Benjy. trying to release himself from Loveday's grasp of affection.

"Thought 'twas my son!" faltered the miller sinking back upon the toes of the neighbours who had closely followed him into the entry. "Well – come in, Farmer Derriman, & make yerself at home. Why, you have n't been here for years. What ever has made ye come now of all times in the world?"

"Is he in there with ye?" whispered the farmer with misgiving.

"Who?"

"My nephy – after that maid that he's so mighty smit with?"

"Oh no – he never calls here."

Farmer Derriman breathed a breath of relief. "Well, I've called to tell ye," he said "that there's more news of the French. We shall have 'em here this month as sure as a gun. The gunboats be all ready – near two thousand o'em – & the whole army is at Boulogne. And miller, I know ye to be an honest man."

Loveday did not say nay.

"Neighbour Loveday, I know ye to be an honest man" repeated the farmer. "Can I speak to ye alone?"

As the house was full Loveday took him into the garden, all the while upon tenterhooks, (not lest Buonaparte should appear in their midst, but) lest Bob should come whilst he was not there to receive him. When they had got into a corner Uncle Benjy said "Miller, what with the French, & what with my nephew Festus, I assure ye my life is nothing but wherrit from morning to night. Miller Loveday, you be an honest man.

Loveday nodded.

"Well, I've come to ask a favour – to ask if you will take charge of my few poor papers & documents & such like, while I am away from home next week, lest anything should befal me & they should be stole away by Boney or Festus, & I should have nothing left in the wide world."

Loveday after some hesitation agreed to take care of anything that Derriman should bring, whereupon the farmer said that he would call with the property alluded to in the course of a week. Derriman then went away by the garden gate, mounted his pony which had been tethered outside, & rode on till his form was lost in the shades.

The miller rejoined his friends, & found that in the meantime John had arrived. John informed them, (company) that after parting from his father

& Anne he had ~~strolled~~ rambled to the harbour, & discovered the Peewit by the quay. On enquiry he had learnt that she came in at eleven o'clock & that Bob had gone ashore.

"We'll go & meet him," said the miller. "'Tis still light out of doors."

So as the dew rose from the meads & formed fleeces in the hollows Loveday & his friends & neighbours strolled out, & loitered by the stiles which traversed the footpath from Overcombe to the highroad, at intervals of a hundred yards. John Loveday being obliged to return to camp was unable to accompany them, but Widow Garland thought proper to fall in with the procession. When she had put on her bonnet she called to her daughter & asked if she was ready to come too. Anne said from upstairs that she was coming in a minute; & her mother walked on without her.

What was Anne doing? Having hastily unlocked a receptacle for emotional objects of small size she took thence the little folded paper with which we have already become acquainted, & striking a light from her pinnet tinderbox she held the paper, & curl of hair it contained, in the candle till it was burnt. Then she put on her hat & followed her mother & the rest across the moist grey fields, cheerfully singing in an undertone ~~[illegible]~~ as she went, to assure herself of her indifference to circumstances.

End of Part 4.

~~While Loveday & his neighbours were thus strolling forth some of them, including Anne in the rear, heard the crackling of light wheels round by the curved lane to which the path was the chord. Anne thought, "Perhaps that's he, & we are missing him;" but recent events were not of a kind to induce her to say anything, & the others [illegible] did not reflect on the matter. Had they gone across to the [illegible] hedge which hid the lane,~~

"The Trumpet-Major."

lgw.

PART V

Chapter XV.

"Captain" Bob Loveday of the merchant service

While Loveday & his neighbours were thus rambling forth, full of expectancy, some of them, including Anne in the rear, heard the crackling of light wheels along the sunken curved lane to which the path was the chord. Anne thought "Perhaps that's he, & we are missing him". But recent events were not of a kind to induce her to say anything; & the others did not reflect on the sound. [Had they gone across the ledge which lined the lane

& looked through it they would have seen a light cart driven by a boy, beside whom was seated a sea-faring man, apparently of good standing in the merchant service, with his feet on the shaft. The vehicle went over the main bridge, turned in upon the other bridge at the tail of the mill, & halted by the door. The sailor alighted, showing himself to be a well-shaped though not very tall young man, with a bright eye, and of such a rich complexion, by exposure to ripening suns that he might have been some connection of that foreigner who calls his likeness the Portrait of a Gentleman in galleries of the old masters. yet in spite of this, & though Bob Loveday had been all over the world from Cape Horn to Pekin, & from India's coral strand to the White Sea, the most conspicuous of all the marks that he had brought back with him was an increased resemblance to his mother who had lain all the time under Overcombe aisle wall.

Captain Loveday tried the house door; finding this locked he went to the mill door: this was locked also, the mill being stopped for the night.

"They are not at home," he said to the boy. "But never mind that. Just help to unload the things; & then I'll pay ye, & you can drive off home."

The cart was unloaded, & the boy was dismissed, thanking the sailor properly for the payment rendered. Then Bob Loveday, finding that he had still some leisure on his hands, looked smilingly east, west, north, south, & nadir; after which he bestirred himself by carrying his goods, article by article, round to the back door, out of the way of casual passers. This done he walked round the mill in a more regardful attitude, & surveyed its familiar features one by one, the panes of the grinding room, now as heretofore clouded with flour as with stale hoar-frost; the meal lodged in the corners of the window-sills, forming a soil in which lichens grew without ever getting any bigger, as they had done since his smallest infancy; the mosses on the plinth towards the river, reaching

as high as the capillary power of the walls would fetch up moisture for their nourishment, & the penned mill-pond, now as ever on the point of overflowing into the garden. Everything was the same.

It occurred to Loveday that he might get into the house in spite of the locked doors; & by placing a pole from the fork of an appletree to the window-sill, & climbing across, he entered the window, there was something anomalous in being close to the familiar furniture without having first seen his father, & its silent impassive face was not cheering; he went downstairs, & seated himself in the dark parlour. Finding this place rather solitary, & the tick of the invisible clock preternaturally loud, he unearthed the tinderbox, obtained a light, & set about making the house comfortable for his father's return, rightly divining that the miller had gone out to meet him by the wrong road.

Robert's interest in this work increased as he proceeded, & he bustled round & round the kitchen as lightly as a girl. David the indoor factotum having lost himself among the quart pots of Weymouth, there had been nobody left here to prepare supper, & Bob had it all to himself. In a short time a fire blazed up the chimney, a table-cloth was found, the plates were clapped down, & a search made for what provisions the house afforded, which included some fresh eggs of the elongated shape that produces cockerels, & had been set aside on that account for putting under broody hens.

A more reckless cracking of eggs than that which now went on had never been known in Overcombe since the last large christening; & as Loveday gashed one on the side, another at the end, another

longways & another diagonally he acquired adroitness by practice, & at last made every son of a hen fall into two hemispheres as neatly as if it opened by a hinge.

[redacted]

From eggs he proceeded to ham & from ham to bacon, the result being a brilliant fry.

[redacted]

Not to be tempted to fall to before his father came back, the returned navigator emptied the whole frying-pan into a dish, laid a plate over the top, his coat over the plate, & his hat over his coat. Thus completely stopping in the appetizing smell he sat down to await events. He was relieved from the tediousness of doing this by hearing voices outside; & in a minute his father entered.

"Glad to welcome ye home, father," said Bob. "And supper is just ready."

"Lard, Lard — why Captain Bob's here!" said Mrs Garland.

"And we've been out waiting to meet thee!" said the miller, as he entered the room, followed by representatives of the house of Cripplestraw, Comfort, Mitchell, Beach, & Brooks, together with some small beginnings of Tremletts posterity. In the rear came David, & quite in the vanishing point of the composition, Anne the fair.

"I drove over; & so was forced to come by the road," said Bob.

"And we went across the fields thinking you'd walk," said his father.

"I should have been here this morning; but not so much as a wheelbarrow could I get: everything was gone to the review! So I went too, thinking I might meet you there. I was then obliged to return to Weymouth for my luggage."

Then there was a welcoming of Captain Bob by putting out his arms like drawers & shutting them again, smacking him on the back as if he were unwell, holding him at arms length as if he were too large

type to read close. All which persecution Bob bore with a [illegible] wide genial smile that was shaken into fragments & scattered promiscuously [illegible] among the spectators.

"Get a chair for'n!" said the miller to David (whom they had met in the fields & found to have got nothing worse by his absence than a slight slant in his walk)

"Never mind – I am not tired" – I have been here ever so long," said Bob. "And I —" But the chair having been placed behind him, & a smart touch in the hollow of a person's knee by the edge of that piece of furniture having a tendency to make the person sit without further argument, Bob sank down dumb, & the others drew up their chairs at a convenient nearness for easy analytic vision & the subtler forms of good fellowship. The miller went about saying "David, the nine best glasses from the corner cupboard!" – "David, the corkscrew!" – "David, whisk the tail of my smockfrock round the inside of these quart pots afore you draw drink in 'em – they be a inch thick in dust" – "David lower that chimney crook three notches that the flame may towel the bottom of the kettle," – "If you can't get the cork out of the jar, David bore a hole in the tub of hollands that's buried under the scroff in the fuel house, d'ye hear – Dan Brown left en here yesterday as a return for the little porker I gied en."

When they had all had a thimbleful round, & the superfluous neighbours had reluctantly departed one by one, the inmates gave their minds to the supper, which David had begun to serve up.

"What be you rolling back the tablecloth for, David?" said the miller.

"Maister Bob have just down one of the under sheets by mistake, & I thought you might not like it, Sir, as there's ladies present?"

"Faith, 'twas the first thing that came to hand," said Robert. "Never mind – don't pull off the things now he's laid 'em down – let it bide," said the miller. "But where's Widow Garland & Maidy Anne?"

X 'Tis only my common way of speaking.

"They were here but a minute ago," said David. "Depend upon it they have slinked off 'cause they be shy."

The miller at once went round to ask them to come back & sup with him; & while he was gone David told Bob in confidence what an excellent place he had, for an old man.

"Yes, Capm Bob, as I suppose I must call ye; I've worked for yer father these eight & thirty years, & we have always got on very well together. Trusts me with all the keys, lends me his sleeve-waistcoat, & leaves the house entirely to me. Widow Garland next door, too, is just the same with me, & treats me as if I was her own child."

"She must have married young to make you that, David." "Yes, yes. I'm years older than she"

Mrs Garland would not come in to supper, & the meal proceeded without her, Bob recommending to his father the dish he had cooked, in the manner of a householder to a stranger just come. The miller was anxious to know more about his son's plans for the future, but would not for the present interrupt his eating, looking up from his own plate to appreciate Bob's travelled way of putting English victuals out of sight, as he would have looked at a mill or improved pigsty.

David had only just got the table clear, & set the plates in a row under the bakehouse table for the cats to lick, when the door was hastily opened & Mrs Garland came in, looking concerned. "I have been wanting to hear the plates removed to tell you how frightened we are at something we hear at the back-door. It seems like people muttering; but when I look out there's nobody there!"

"This must be seen to," said the miller rising promptly. "David, light the middle-sized lantern. I'll go & search the garden."

"And I'll go too," said his son, taking up a cudgel. "Begad I've come home just in time!"

They went out timidly, followed by the widow & Anne, who had been afraid to stay alone in the house under the circumstances. No sooner were they

beyond the door, when. sure enough, there was the muttering, almost close at hand, & low upon the ground, as from persons lying down in hiding.

"Bless my heart," ~~what a load me it~~ said Bob striking his head as though it were some enemy's. "Why, 'tis my luggage. (I'd quite forgot it!) [What? asked his father. [My luggage. Really if it had'nt fallen for Mrs Garland it would have stayed there all night, & they poor things would have been starved. I've got all sorts of articles for ye. You go inside & I'll bring 'em in. "'Tis parrots that you hear a muttering, Mrs. Garland. (You needn't be afraid any more.)

"Parrots?" said the miller: "Well I'm glad 'tis no worse. But how couldst forget so, Bob?"

The packages were taken in by David & Bob, & the first things unfastened were three of cylindrical shape, wrapped in cloths, which being stripped off revealed three cages, with a gorgeous parrot in each.

"This one is for you, father, to hang up outside the door, & amuse us," said Bob. "He'll talk very well, but he's sleepy to night. This other one I brought along for any neighbour that would like to have him. His colours are not so bright; but 'tis a good bird.... If you would like him you are welcome to him," he said turning to Anne, who had been tempted forward by the birds. "You have hardly spoken yet, Miss Anne, but I recollect you very well. How much taller you have got to be sure!"

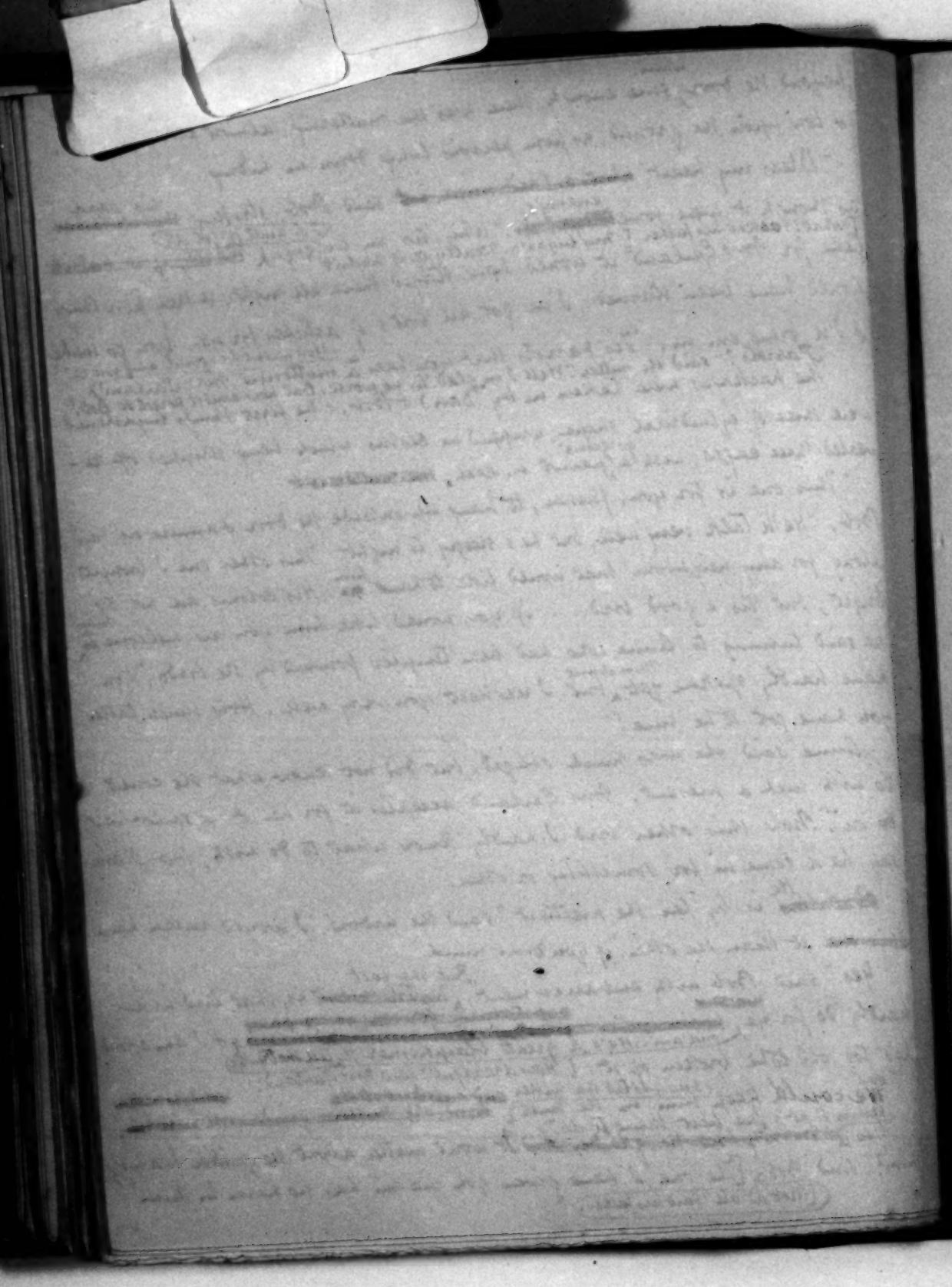
Anne said she was much obliged, but did not know what she could do with such a present. Mrs Garland accepted it for her, & the sailor went on. "Now this other bird I hardly know what to do with; but I dare say he'll come in for something or other."

"He is by far the prettiest," said the widow. "I would rather have it than the other, if you don't mind."

"Yes," said Bob with embarrassment. "But the fact is, that bird with ~~[illegible]~~ hardly do for ye, ma'am. He's a great blasphemer, to tell the truth, & I am afraid he's too old to be broken of it. [How dreadful," said Mrs Garland.

"We could keep him in the mill," suggested the miller. "Perhaps that's the best thing to do." Yes it won't matter about the grinder hearing him?" said Bob. [The one I have given you ma'am, has no harm in him.

[Not at all" said his father.



at all. You might take him to church o' Sundays as far as that goes."

The sailor now untied a small wooden box about a foot square, perforated with holes. "Here are two marmosets," he continued. "You can't see them to-night, but they are beauties — the tufted sort."

"What's a marmoset?" said the miller.

"Oh, a little kind of monkey. They bite sharpers rather hard, but you'll soon get used to 'em."

"They are wrapped up in something, I declare," said Mrs Garland peeping in through a chink.

"Yes, that's my flannel shirt," said Bob, apologetically. "They suffer terribly from cold in this climate, poor things, & I had nothing better to give them. — Well now, in this next box I've got things of different sorts." The latter was a layer drunk & out of it he produced shells of many sizes & colours, carved ivories, queer little caskets, gorgeous feathers, & several silk handkerchiefs, which articles were spread out upon all the available tables & chairs till the house began to look like a bazaar.

"What a lovely shawl!" exclaimed Widow Garland, in her interest forsaking the regular exhibition by looking into the box at what was coming.

"Oh, yes," said the mate, pulling out a couple of the most bewitching shawls that eyes ever saw. "One of these I am going to give to that young woman I am shortly to be married to, you know, Mrs. Garland — has father told you about it? — Matilda Johnson of Southampton. That's her name."

"Yes, we know all about it" said the widow.

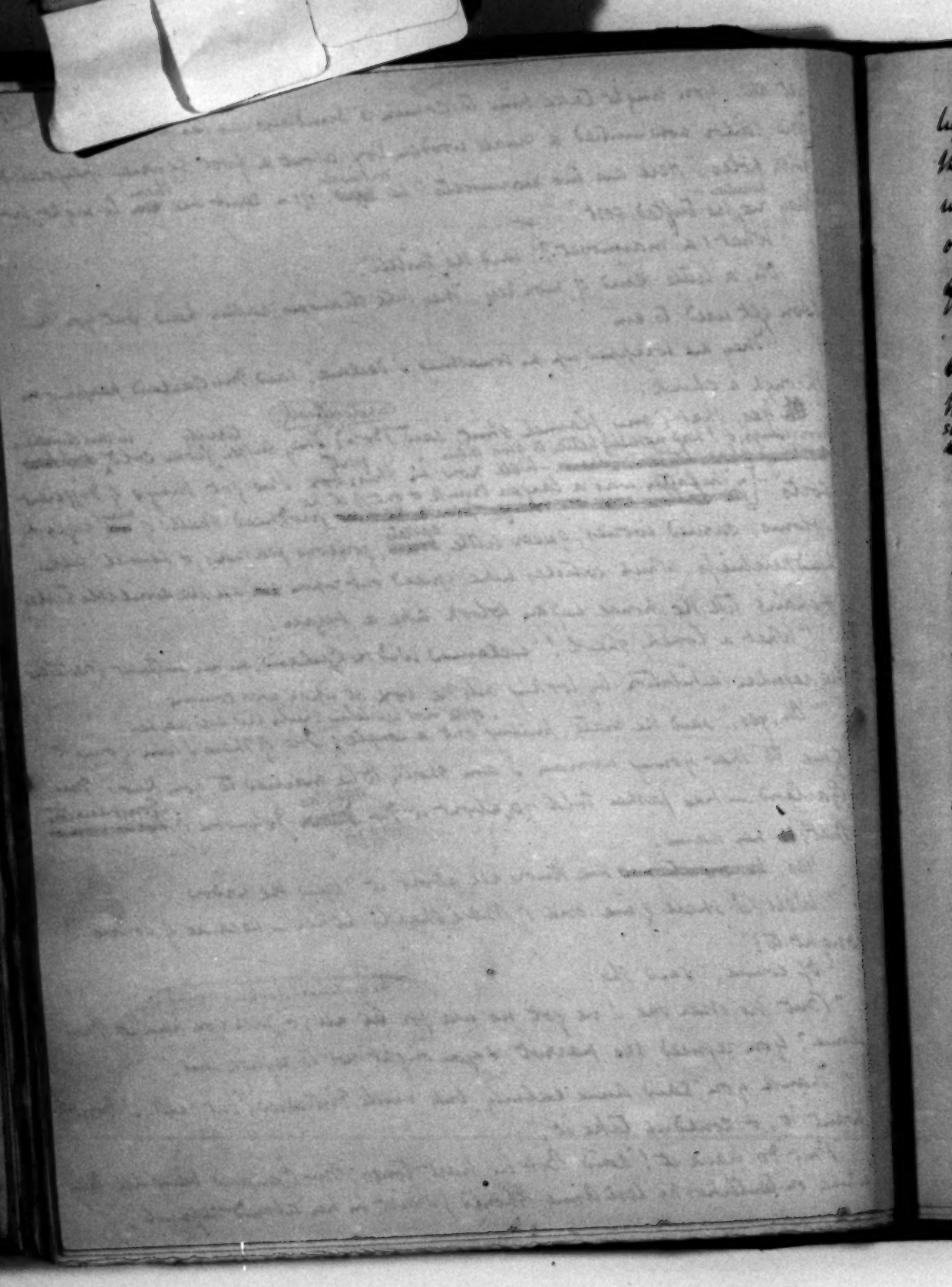
"Well, I shall give one of these shawls to her — because, of course, I ought to."

"Of course," said she.

"But the other one I've got no use for at all; so, he continued, looking round, will you have it, Miss Anne? You refused the parrot, & you ought not to refuse this."

"Thank you," said Anne calmly but much distressed; "but really I don't want it, & couldn't take it."

"But do have it!" said Bob in hurt tones; Mrs Garland being all the while on tenterhooks lest Anne should persist in her absurd refusal.



"Why, there's another reason why you ought to!" said he, his face lighting up with recollections. "It never came into my head till this moment that I used to be your beau in a humble sort of way. Faith, so I did, & we used to ~~walk~~ meet at places sometimes, didn't we, (that is, when you were not too proud) & once I gave you, or somebody else, a bit of my hair in fun." ~~Did you keep it?~~

"It was somebody else," said Anne quietly.

"Ah, perhaps it was," said Bob innocently. "But it was you I used to ~~be~~ meet, or try to, I am sure. Well, I've never thought of that boyish time for years till this minute! I am sure you ought to accept some one gift, dear, out of compliment to those old times?"

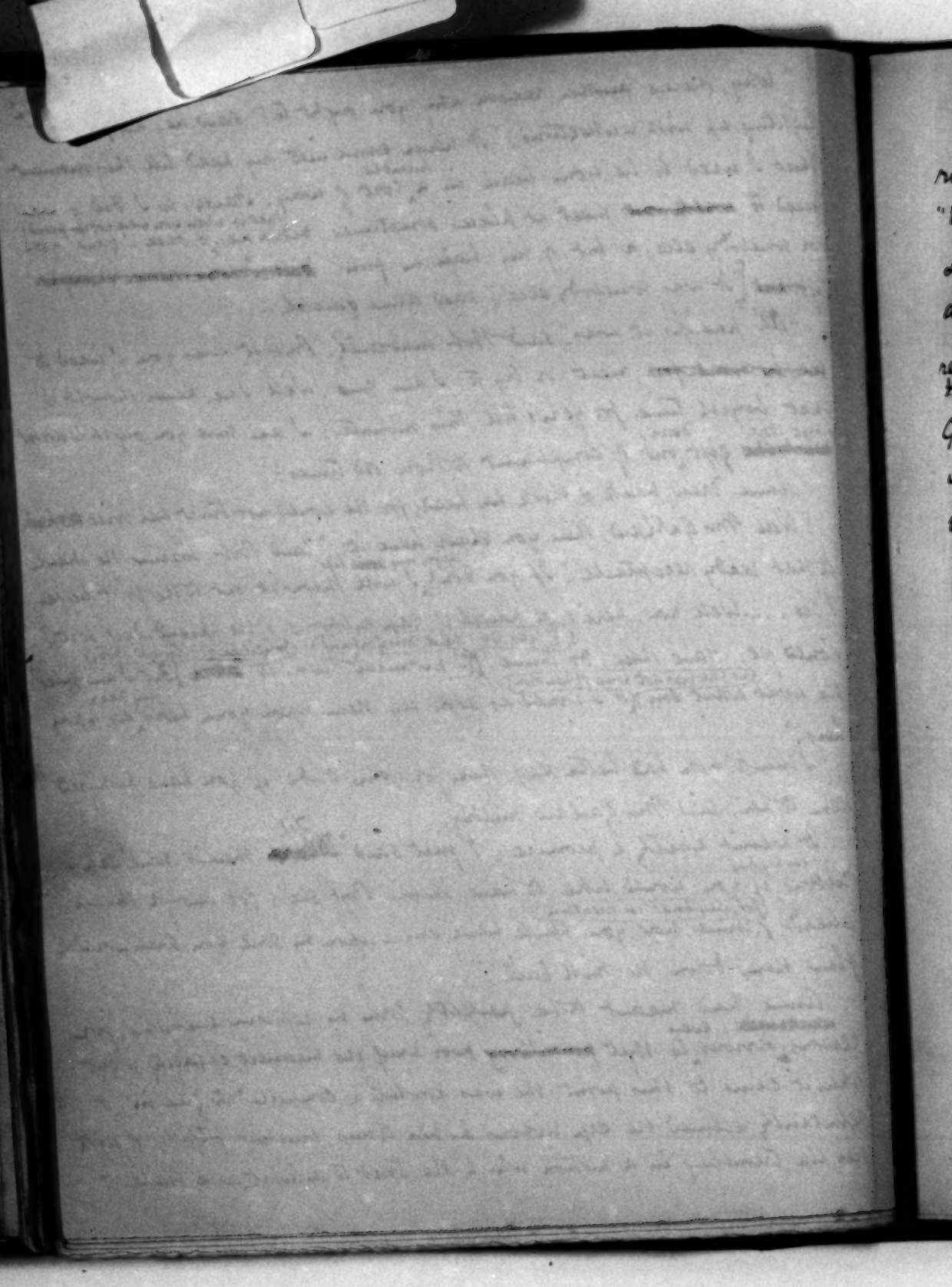
Anne drew back & shook her head, for she would not trust her voice ~~to speak~~.

"Well Mrs Garland, then you shall have it," said Bob, tossing the shawl to that ready receptacle. "If you don't, upon my soul life I will throw it out to the first beggar I see ..... Well now, here's a parcel of cap ribbons the splendidest sort I could get. Have these, do Anne!" ("Yes, do," said Mrs Garland) ("I promised them to Matilda" continued Bob) "but I am sure she won't want 'em (as she has got some of her own) & I would as soon see them upon your head, my dear, as upon hers."

"I think you had better keep them for your bride if you have promised them to her," said Mrs Garland mildly.

"It wasn't exactly a promise. I just said 'Til, there's some cap-ribbons in my box if you would like to have them'. But she's got enough things already (for any bride in creation) Anne, now you shall have 'em – upon my soul you shall, or I'll fling them down the mill tail."

Anne had meant to be perfectly firm in refusing everything, for reasons, obvious, even to that poor waif the meanest capacity; but when it came to this point she was absolutely compelled to give in, & reluctantly received the cap ribbons in her arms, blushing fitfully, & with her lip trembling in a motion which she tried to exhibit as a smile.



"What would Tilly say if she knew!" said the miller slily.

"Yes indeed – and it is wrong of him!"

"[redacted]" Anne instantly cried, tears running down her face as she threw the parcel of ribbons on the floor. "You'd better bestow your gifts where you bestow your l.l.-love, Mr. Loveday – that's what I say!" And Anne turned her back & went away.

"I'll take them for her" said Mrs Garland, quickly picking up the parcel.

"Now that's a pity," said Bob looking regretfully after her. "I didn't remember that she was a quick-tempered sort of girl at all. Tell her (Anne) Mrs. Garland, that I ask her pardon. But of course I didn't know she was too proud to accept a little present – how should I? Upon my life if it wasn't for Matilda I'd – Well, that can't be, of course."

"What's this?" said Mrs Garland, touching with her foot a large package that had been laid down by Bob unseen.

"That's only a bit of bacey for myself" said Robert, meekly. "[redacted]"

The examination of presents at last ended, & the two families parted for the night. When they were alone Mrs Garland said to Anne, "What a close girl you are! I am sure I never knew that Bob Loveday & you had walked together: you must have been mere children."

"O yes – so we were," said Anne now quite recovered. "It was when we first came here, about a year after father died. We did not walk together in any regular way. (You know I have never thought Bob Loveday good enough for me.) It was only just – nothing at all, & I had almost forgotten it."

It is to be hoped that somebody's sins were forgiven her that night before she went to bed.

When Bob & his father were left alone the miller said, "Well Robert,

about this young woman of thine – ~~Dinah~~ Matilda what's her name."

"Her father – ~~Dinah~~ Matilda Johnson. I was just going to tell ye about her."

The miller nodded, & sipped his ~~glass~~ mug.

"Well, she is an excellent body," continued Bob: "that truly can be said – ~~exceptional~~ a real charmer, you know – a nice good comely young woman, a miracle of genteel breeding, you know, & all that. She can throw her hair into the nicest curls, & she's got splendid gowns & head-clothes. In short you might call her a land mermaid. She'll make such a first-rate wife as there never was."

"No doubt she will," said the miller; "for I have never known her wanting in sense in a general way." He turned his cup round on its axis till the handle had travelled a complete circle. "How long did you say in your letter that you had known her?"

"A fortnight."

"Not very long."

"It don't sound long – 'tis true; 'tis really ~~a little~~ longer, fifteen days & a quarter times. But hang it, father, I could see in the twinkling of an eye that the girl would do. I know a woman well enough when I see her – I ought to, indeed, having been so much about the world. Now for instance, there's Widow Garland & her daughter. The girl is a nice little thing; but the old woman – O no!" Bob shook his head.

"What of her?" said his father, slightly shifting in his chair.

"Well, she's, she's – I mean, I should never have chosen her, you know. She's of a nice disposition; but of all the men had been like me she would never have had a husband. I like her in some respects; but she's a style of beauty I don't care for."

"Oh, if 'tis only looks you are thinking of," said the miller much relieved "there's nothing to be said of course..... though there's many a duchess worse

as you would find, my son;"
looking, if it comes to argument," he added, with a sense of having been mollified somewhat too soon.

The mate's thoughts were elsewhere by this time. "As to my marrying Miss Matilda, thinks I, here's one of the very tip-top sort; & I may as well do the job at once. So I chose her. She's a dear girl: there's nobody like her, search where you will."

"How many did you choose her out from?" inquired his father grimly.

"Well, she was the only young woman I happened to know in Southampton, that's true; But what of that? It would have been all the same if I had known a hundred."

"Her father is in business near the docks, I suppose?"

"Well no — in short I didn't see her father."

"Her mother?"

"Her mother — no, I didn't. I think her mother is dead. But she has got a very rich aunt living at Salisbury. I didn't see her aunt because there wasn't time to go; but of course we shall know her when we are married."

"Yes yes, of course," said the miller trying to feel quite satisfied. "And she will soon be here?"

"She's coming Sunday," said Bob. "She has gone to this aunt's at Salisbury, to get her things packed & such like, or she would have come with me. I am going to meet the coach at the King's Arms, Dorchester, at one o'clock. To show what a capital sort of wife she'll be, I may tell you that she wanted to come by the Mercury, because 'tis a little cheaper than the other. But I said, 'for once in your life, do it well, & come by the Royal Mail, & I'll pay'. I can have the pony & trap to fetch her, I suppose, as 'tis too far for her to walk?"

"Of course you can, Bob, or anything else. And I'll do all I can to give thee a good wedding feast."

Chapter XVI

They ~~began~~ to make ready for the illustrious stranger.

Preparations for Matilda's welcome, & for the event which was to follow, at once occupied the attention of the mill. The miller & his man had but dim notions of housewifery on any large scale, so the great wedding cleaning was kindly supervised by Mrs. Garland, Bob being mostly away during the day with his brother the trumpet-major on various errands, one of which was to buy paint & varnish for the gig that Matilda was to be fetched in, which he had determined to decorate with his own hand.

By the widow's direction the old familiar encrustation of shining dirt, imprinted along the back of the settle by the heads of countless jolly sitters, was scrubbed & scraped away; the brown circle round the nail whereon the miller hung his hat, stained by the brim in wet weather, was whitened over; the tawny smudges of bygone shoulders in the passage were removed without regard to a certain genial & historical value which they had acquired. The face of the clock, coated with verdigris as thick as a diachylon plaster, was rubbed till the figures emerged into day; while inside the case of the same chronometer, the cobwebs that formed triangular hammocks through which the pendulum could hardly wade, were cleared away at one swoop. Mrs Garland also assisted at the invasion of worm-eaten cupboards, where layers of ancient smells lingered on in the stagnant air, & recalled to the reflective nose the many good things that had been kept here. The upper floors were scrubbed with such abundance of water that the old-established death-watches, wood-lice, & flour-worms were all drowned, & the suds trickling down into the room below in so lively a manner as to convey the romantic notion that the miller lived in a cave with dripping stalactites.

They moved what had never been before moved – the oak coffer containing the miller's wardrobe – a tremendous weight, what with its locks, hinges, nails, dirt, framework, & the hard stratification of old jackets, waistcoats, & knee-breeches at the bottom, never disturbed since the miller's wife died, & half petrified by

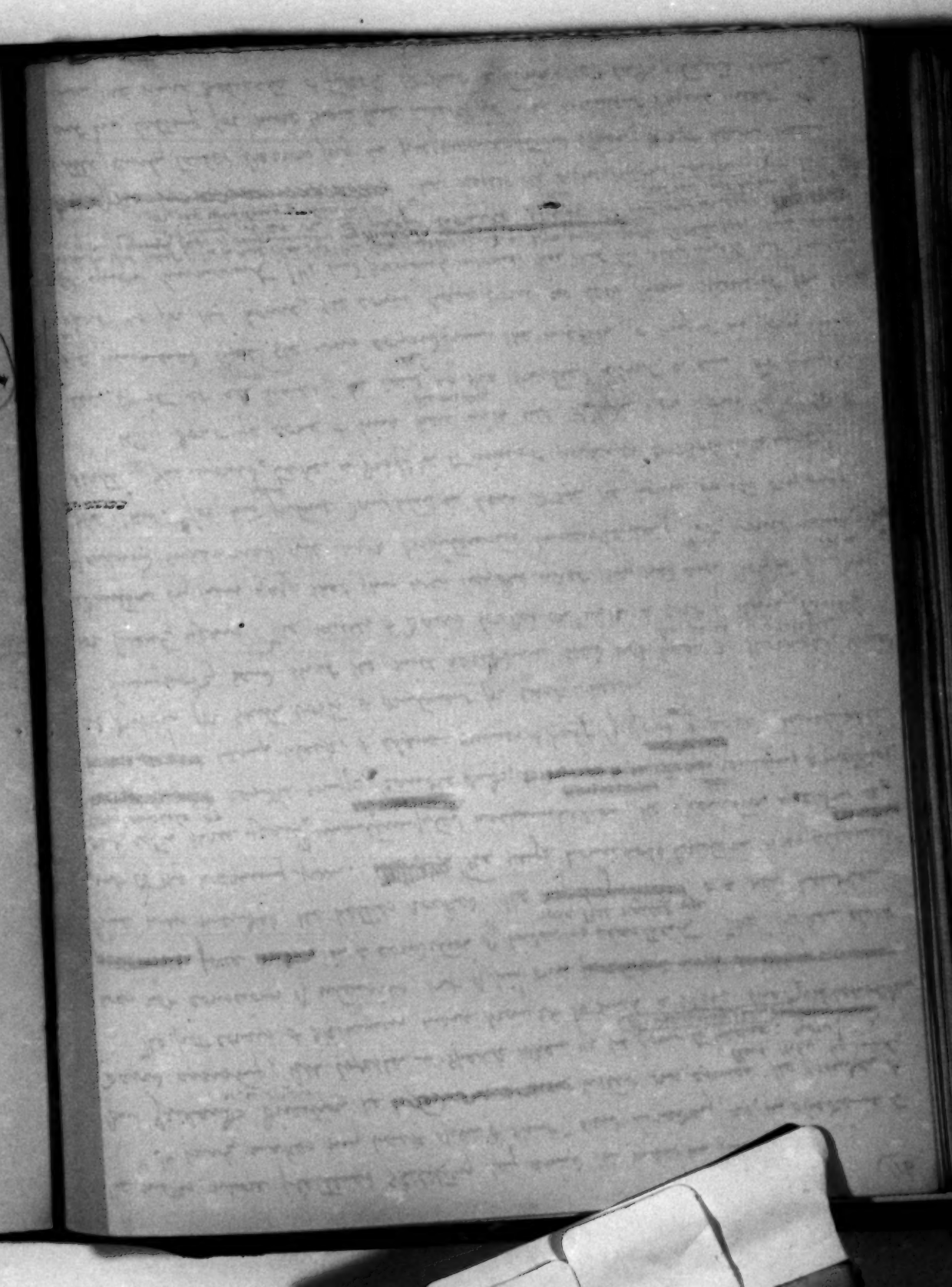
the moths, whose flattened skeletons lay amid the mass in thousands

"It fairly makes my back ache & shut": said Loveday, as, in obedience to Mrs Garland's direction he lifted one corner. He grinded & David assisting, at the others. "All together — speak when ye be going to heave: now!" And they heaved.

The pot covers & skimmers were brought to such a state that the beholder was not conscious of utensils, but of thin ones [illegible] face in a condition of hideous elasticity. The broken clock-line was mended, the kettles rocked, the rose tree nailed up, & a new handle put to the warming-pan. The large household lantern was cleaned out, after three years of uninterrupted accumulation, the operation yielding a conglomerate of candle-snuffs, candle ends, remains of matches, lamp-black, & eleven ounces & half of good grease, invaluable as dubbin for shiny boots & ointment for cart-wheels.

Everybody said that the mill residence had not been so thoroughly cleaned for twenty years. The miller & David looked on with a sort of awe, tempered by gratitude, tacitly admitting by their gaze that this was beyond what they had ever thought of. Mrs Garland supervised all with disinterested benevolence, & "It would never have done" she said, "for his future daughter in law to see the house in its original state. She would have taken a dislike to him, & perhaps to Bob likewise."

"Why dont ye come & live here with me, & then you would be able to see to it at all times," the miller said as she bustled about again. To which she answered that she was considering the matter, & might in good time. That as for the house, she could have done no less than clean it for him in common humanity. [He had previously informed her that his plan was to put Bob & his wife in the part of the house that she (Mrs Garland) occupied, as soon as she chose to enter his, which relieved her of any [illegible] on that account.] & [illegible] cooking them on a prodigious scale of thoroughness (for the wedding festivities) they killed the four superfluous chickens (that had just begun to crow) & the little curly-tailed barrow pig, in preference to the other; it not having been put up fattening for more than five weeks it was excellent small meat, & therefore more delicate & likely to suit a town-bred lady's taste than the



large one, which having reached the weight of fourteen score, might have been a little gross to a cultivated palate. There were also provided a cold chine, stuffed veal & two pigeon pies. Also seventy rings of black-pot, a dozen of white-pot, & twenty five knots of tender & well washed chitterlings cooked plain, in case she should like a change.

As additional resources there were sweetbreads, & five milts, seam up at one side in the form of a chrysalis, & stuffed with marjoram, thyme sage, parsley, mint, groats, rice, milk, chopped egg, & other ingredients. They were afterwards roasted before a slow fire like martyrs, & eaten hot.

The business of chopping so many herbs for the various stuffings was found to be aching work for women; & David, the miller, the grinder, & the grinder's boy being fully occupied in their proper branches, & Bob being very busy painting the gig, & tackening up the harness, Loveday called in a friendly dragoon of John's regiment who was passing by; & he, being a muscular man, willingly chopped all the afternoon for a quart of strong, judiciously administered, & all other victuals found — taking off his jacket & gloves, & rolling up his shirt sleeves, & unfastening his collar in an honourable & energetic way.

All windfalls & maggot-cored codlins were excluded from the apple pies; and as there was no known dish large enough for the purpose, the puddings were stirred up in the milking pail, & boiled in the three-legged bell-metal crock, of great weight & antiquity, which every travelling tinker for the previous thirty years had tapped with his stick, coveted, made a bid for, & often attempted to steal.

~~[illegible]~~

In the liquor line, Loveday laid in an ample barrel of "strong beer". This renowned drink — now almost as much a thing of the past — was not only well calculated to win the hearts of soldiers blown dry & dusty by residence in tents on a hill-top, but of any wayfarer

Dorchester as Falstaff's favourite beverage

whatever in that land. It was of the most beautiful colour that ever the eye of an artist in beer could desire; yet brisk as a volcano; pleasant, yet a strong; but luminous, as an autumn sunset; free from streakiness of taste; but finally rather heady. The masses worshipped it, the minor gentry loved it more than wine, by the most illustrious county families it was not despised. Anybody brought up for being drunk & disorderly in the streets of its native borough had only to prove that he was a stranger to the place & its liquor to be honourably dismissed by the magistrates as one overtaken in a fault that no man could guard against who entered the town unaware.

In addition, Mr Loveday also tapped a hogshead of fine cider that he had mellowing in the house for several months, having bought it of an honest down-country man who did not colour, for any special occasion like the present. It had been pressed from chosen fruit judiciously by an old hand — Horner & Cleeves apples for the body, a few Crimson-Kitties for colour, & just a dash of Old-Fivecorners for sparkle — a selection originally made to please the palate of a well-known Ampergate earl who was a regular cider-drinker, & lived to the eighty-eight.

serpentine lines along the road during the first mile or two, before he had got his hand in, & that the horse shied at a mile-stone, a piece of paper, a sleeping tramp, a wheelbarrow, just to make use of the opportunity of being in bad hands.

He entered Dorchester between twelve & one, & putting up at the Old Grey-hound walked on to the Bow. Here, rather dusty on the ledges of his person, he stood & waited while the people poured out of the three churches round him in their best Sunday clothes. When they had all gone, & a smell of cinders & gravy had spread down the ancient high-street, & the pie-dishes from adjacent bakehouses

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On the morning of the Sunday appointed for her coming, Captain Bob Loveday had set out to meet his bride. He had been all the week engaged in painting the gig, assisted by his brother at odd times, & it now appeared of a gorgeous yellow, with blue streaks & tassels at the corners, & red wheels. He put in the pony at half past eleven, Anne looking at him from the door as he packed himself into the vehicle & drove off. There may be young women who look out at young men driving to meet their brides (outlined with a darker shade.) as Anne looked at Captain Bob, & yet are quite unprepared for the circumstances; but they are not often met with.

So much dust had been raised on the highway by traffic resulting from the presence of the Court at Weymouth that brambles hanging from the fences & dingy as giving a friendly scratch to the wanderer's face were almost covered cobwebs, & the grass on the margin had assumed a paper-shaving hue. Bob's father had wished him to take David, lest from want of recent experience at the whip he should meet with any mishap; but, picturing to himself the awkwardness of three in such circumstances, Bob would not hear of this; & nothing more serious happened to his driving than that the wheel-marks formed two beautiful serpentine lines along the road during the first mile or two, before he had got his hand in, & that the horse shied at a mile-stone, a piece of paper, a sleeping tramp, & a wheelbarrow, just to make use of the opportunity of being in bad hands.

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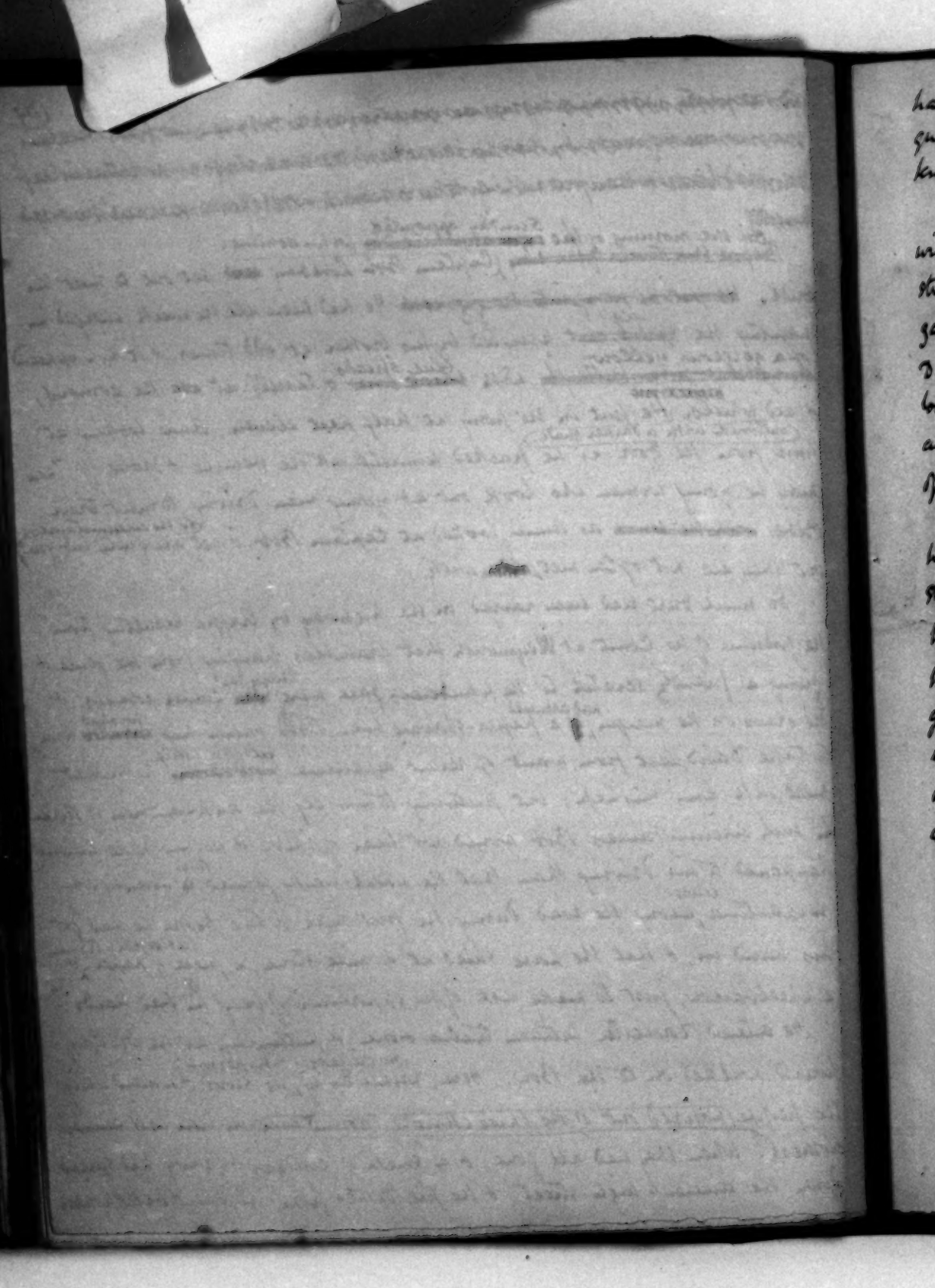


had all travelled past, he saw the mail coach rise above the arch of Grey's Bridge a quarter of a mile distant ~~the mail coach~~ surmounted by swaying knobs, which proved to be the heads of the outside travellers.

"That's the way for a man's bride to come to him!" said Robert ~~Bob~~ to himself with a feeling of poetry; & as the horn sounded & the horses clattered up the street he walked down to the Inn. The knot of hostlers & inn-servants had gathered, as the horses were mauled from the vehicle, & the passengers for Dorchester began to descend. Captain Bob eyed them over, looked inside, looked outside again; to his disappointment Matilda ~~she~~ was not there, nor her boxes, ~~nor anything~~ nor anything that was hers. Neither coachman nor guard had seen or heard of such a person at Salisbury; & Bob walked slowly away.

Depressed by forebodings to an extent which took away sensibly ~~much~~ a third of his appetite ~~he~~ he sat down in the parlour of the Old Greyhound to a chop from the family joint of the landlord. This gentleman, who dined in his shirt sleeves, partly because it was August, & partly from a sense that they ~~would~~ would not be so fit for public view ~~as they would be further on in the week~~ further on in the week, suggested that Bob should wait till three or four that afternoon, when the road-waggon would arrive, as the lost lady might have preferred that mode of conveyance; & when Bob appeared rather hurt at the suggestion, the landlord's wife assured him, ~~that~~ as a woman who knew good life, that many genteel persons travelled that way during the present high prices of provisions. Loveday, who knew little of travelling by land, readily accepted her assurance & resolved to wait.

Wandering up & down the pavement (or leaning against some hot wall) between the waggon-office & the corner of the street above, he passed the time away. It was a still, sunny, drowsy afternoon, & scarcely a soul was visible in the length & breadth of the street. The office was next door to All Saints Church, & the church windows being open he could hear the afternoon service from where he ~~stood~~ lingered, as distinctly as if he had been one of the congregation.

Thus he was mentally conducted through the psalms, through the first & second lessons, through the burst of fiddles & clarionets which announced the evening hymn, & well into the sermon, before any signs of the waggon could be seen upon the London road. The afternoon sermons at this church being of a dry & metaphysical nature at that date, & it was by a special providence that the waggon-office was placed close to the ancient fabric, so that whenever the Sunday waggon was late, which it always was in hot weather, & in cold weather, & in wet weather, & in almost every other sort of weather, the rattle, & & &

publicity, ~~at once~~ - the practical step he had determined on seemed to demand that these things should no longer be done in a corner — "My dear Matilda, why didn't you come by the coach, having the money for't, & all?"

"That's my scrimping!" said Matilda delightfully. "I know you would be offended when you knew I did it to save against a rainy day?"

Bob of course was not offended, though the glory of meeting her had been less; & even if vexation were possible it would have been out of place to say so. Still, he would have experienced no little surprise had he learnt the real reason of his Matilda's change of plan. That angel had, in short, so wilfully spent Bob's & her own money in the adornment of her person before setting out, that she found herself without a sufficient margin for her fare by coach, & had scrimped from sheer necessity.

"Well, I have got the trap out at the Greyhound," said Bob. "I don't know whether it will hold your luggage & us too; but it looked more respectable than the waggon on a Sunday, & if there's not room for the boxes I can walk along side."

"I think there will be room," said Miss Johnson mildly; & it was soon very evident that she spoke the truth, for when her property was deposited on the pavement it consisted of a trunk about eighteen inches long & nothing more.

"Oh — that's all?" said Bob, surprised.

"That's all," said the young woman assuringly. "I didn't want to give trouble you know; & what I have besides I have left at my aunts."

"Yes of course" he answered readily. "And as it's no bigger I can carry it in my hand to the inn, & so it will be no trouble at all."

He caught up the little box & they went side by side to the Greyhound; & in ten minutes they were trotting up the Weymouth road.

Bob did not hurry the horse, for there being many things to say & hear, for which the present situation was admirably suited. The sun

※ [At the words "actors & actresses" the innocent young ~~woman~~ thing pricked up her ears. "Does Elliston ~~keep the best company~~ pay as good salaries this summer as in—"

"Oh – you know about it then? I thought—"

"O no no – I have heard of Weymouth; read in the papers you know, dear Bob, about the doings there; & the actors & actresses you know."

"Yes, yes – I see. Well, I have been away from England a long time, & don't know much about the theatre at Weymouth; but I'll take you there some day. Would it be a treat to you?"

"Oh, an amazing treat!" said Miss Johnson with an ecstasy in which a close observer might have discovered a tinge of ghastliness.

"You've never been into one, perhaps, dear?"

"N – never," said Matilda flatly. Whatever do I see yonder – a row of white things on the down?"

"Yes – that's a part of the encampment above Overcombe. Lots of soldiers are encamped about her. Those are the white tops of their tents."

shone occasionally into Matilda's face (as they drove on), its rays picking out all her features to a great nicety. Her eyes would have been called brown; but they were really eel-colour, like many other nice brown eyes; they were well shaped, & rather bright, though they had more of a broad shine than a sparkle. She had a firm, sufficient nose, which seemed to say of itself that it was good as noses go. She had rather a picturesque way of wrapping her upper in her lower lip so that the red of the latter showed strongly. Whenever she gazed against the sun towards the distant hills she brought into her forehead without knowing it three short vertical lines, not there at other times, giving her for the moment rather a hard look. And in turning her head round to a far angle to stare at something or other that he pointed out, the drawn flesh of her neck became a mass of lines; but Bob did not look at these things, which of course were of no significance; for had she not told him when they compared ages that she was a little over two & twenty?

As Nature was hardly invented at this early point of the century, Bob's Matilda could not say much about the glamour of the hills & the shimmering of the foliage or the wealth of glory in the distant sea, as she would doubtless have done had she lived further on; but she did her best to be interesting, asking Bob about matters of social interest in the neighbourhood, to which she seemed quite a stranger.

"Is Weymouth a large city?" she inquired when they had mounted the hill where the Overcombe folk had waited for the king.

"Bless ye (my dear), no. It would be nothing if it wernt for the Royal Family, & the lords & ladies, & the regiments of soldiers, & the frigates, & the king's messengers, & the actors & actresses, & the games that go on. If you [illegible] you can just see the white tops of the tents

He pointed to a wing of the camp that had become visible. Matilda was much interested. "It will make it very lively for us," he added. "Especially as John is there." She thought so too, & thus they chatted on.

Chapter XVII

Containing two fainting-fits & a bewilderment.

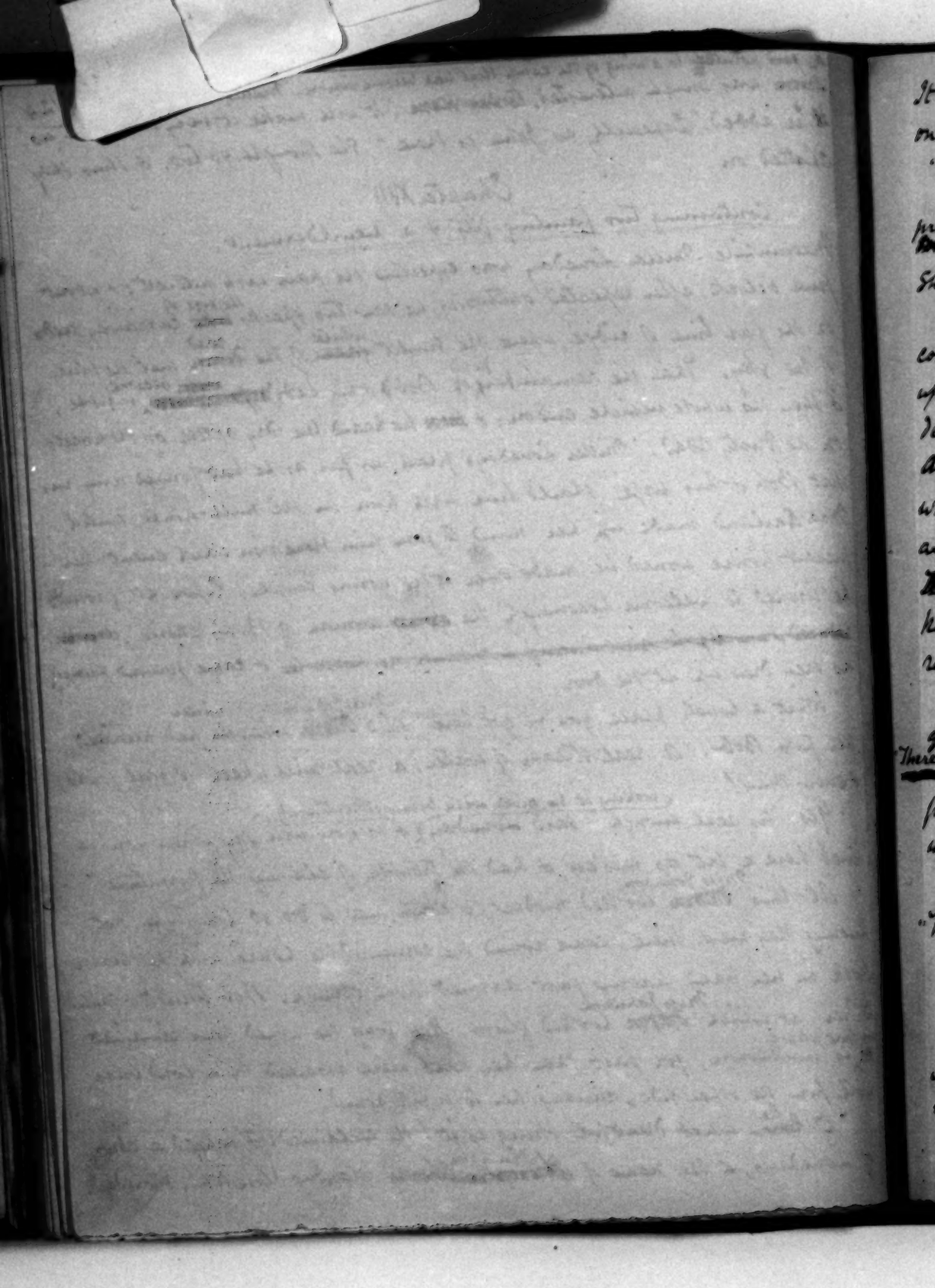
Meanwhile Miller Loveday was expecting the pair with interest; & about five o'clock, after repeated outlooks, he saw two specks the size of caraway seeds on the far line of ridge, where the sunlit white of the road met the blue of the sky. Then the remainder parts of Bob & his lady became visible, & then the whole vehicle, end on; & he heard the dry rattle of the wheels on the dusty road. Miller Loveday's plan, as far as he had formed any, was that Bob & his wife should live with him in the mill-house until Mrs. Garland made up her mind to join him there; in which event her present house would be made over to the young couple. Upon all grounds he wished to welcome becomingly the woman of Bob's choice; & came forward promptly as they drew up at the door.

"What a lovely place you've got here," said Miss Johnson when the miller had received her from Bob. "A real stream of water, a real mill wheel, & real fowls, & everything!"

"Yes, 'tis real enough," said Loveday (looking at the river with balanced sentiments); & so you will say when you've lived here a bit as mis'ess, & had the trouble of cleaning the furniture."

At this Miss Johnson looked modest, & continued to do so till Anne, not knowing they were there, came round the corner of the house with her prayer book in her hand, having just arrived from church. Bob turned & smiled to her, at which Miss Johnson looked glum. How long she would have remained in that phase is unknown, for just then her ears were assailed by a loud bass note from the other side, causing her to jump round.

"O la — what dreadful thing is it! she exclaimed; & beheld a cow of Loveday's, of the name of Crumple, standing close to her shoulder.



It being about milking time she had come to look up David & hasten on the operation.

"Oh, what a horrid bull! — it did frighten me so — I hope I shant faint!" said Matilda

The miller immediately used the formula which has been uttered by the proprietors of live stock since Noah's time. "She won't hurt ye ... Hoosh, Crumpler! She's as timid as a mouse, ma'am."

But as Crumpler persisted in making another terrific inquiry for David, Matilda could not help closing her eyes & saying, "Oh, I shall be gored to death!" her head falling back upon Bob's shoulder, which, seeing the urgent circumstances & knowing her delicate nature, he had providentially placed in a position to catch her. Anne Garland, who had been standing at the corner of the house, not knowing whether to go back or come on, at this felt her womanly sympathies aroused; she ran & dipped her handkerchief into the splashing mill-tail, & with it dampened Matilda's face. But as her eyes still remained closed Bob took the handkerchief from Anne & wrung it out on the bridge of Matilda's nose, whence it ran over the rest of her face in a stream.

"Oh, Captain Loveday!" said Anne. "the water is running over her green silk handkerchief & into her pretty ridicule."

"There — if I did'nt think so!" exclaimed Matilda, opening her eyes & starting up. Promptly she pulled out her own handkerchief & wiped away the drops, assisted by Anne, who, in spite of her background of antagonistic emotions could not help being interested.

"That's right," said the miller, his spirits reviving with the revival of Matilda. "The lady is not used to country life; are you, ma'am?"

"I am not" replied the sufferer. "All is so strange about here."

Suddenly there spread into the firmament from the direction of the down: —

"Ra, ta, ta! Ta-ta-ta-ta-ta! Ra, ta, ta!"

"Oh dear dear — more hideous country sounds I suppose?" she inquired with another start.

"Oh no," said the miller cheerfully. "'Tis only my son John's chaps (Crumpler & dragoons) at the camp-feast

above us, a blowing [redacted] Mess, or Feed, or [redacted] Picket, or some other of their vagaries – John will be much pleased to tell you the meaning out when he comes down. He's trumpet-major, as you may know ma'am."

"Oh yes – you mean Captain Loveday's brother. Dear Bob has mentioned him."

"If you come round to Widow Garland's side of the house you can see the camp", said the miller.

"Don't force her – she's tired with her long journey," said Mrs Garland humanely, the widow having come out in the general wish to see Captain Bob's choice. Indeed, they all behaved towards her as if she were a tender exotic which their crude country manners might seriously injure.

She went into the house accompanied by Mrs Garland & her daughter, though before leaving Bob she managed to whisper in his ear "Don't tell them I came by waggon, will you dear?" – a request which was quite needless, for Bob had long ago determined to keep that a dead secret – not because it was an uncommon mode of travel; but simply that it was hardly the usual conveyance for a gorgeous lady to her bridal.

As the men had a feeling that they would be superfluous indoors just at present, the miller assisted David in taking the horse round to the stables, & Bob following, & leaving Matilda to the women. Indoors Miss Johnson admired everything; the new parrot & marmosets, the black beams of the ceiling, the double corner cupboard with the glass doors through which gleamed the remainders of sundry china sets acquired by Bob's mother in her housekeeping – two handled sugar-basins no-handled teacups, a tea pot like a pagoda & a cream-jug in the form of a spotted cow. This sociability in their visitor was returned by Mrs Garland & Anne; & Miss Johnson's pleasing habit of partly dying whenever she heard any unusual bark or bellow added

to her piquancy in their eyes. But conversation, as such, was naturally at first of a nervous tentative kind, in which, as in the works of the poet Keats, the sense was considerably led by the sound.

"You get the sea breezes here, no doubt?"

"Oh yes. When the wind is that way."

"Do you like windy weather?"

"Yes. Though not now, for it blows down the young apples."

"Apples are plentiful it seems. You country folk call St. Swithin's Days christening day if it rains?"

"Yes. Ah me, I have not been to a christening for these many years — the baby's name was George I remember — after the king."

"I hear that King George is still staying at Weymouth. I hope he'll stay till I have been him!"

"He'll wait till the corn turns yellow — he always does."

"How fashionable yellow is getting for gloves just now."

"Yes. Some persons wear them to the elbow, I hear."

"Do they — I was not aware of that. I struck my elbow last week so hard against the parlour door that I feel the ache now."

Before they were quite overwhelmed by the interest of this discourse the miller Bob came in. In truth Mrs Garland found the office in which he had placed her — that of introducing a strange woman to a house which was not the widow's own — a rather awkward one; & yet almost a necessity. There was no woman belonging to the house except in that wondrous compendium of usefulness the intermittent maidservant, whom Loveday had for appearances borrowed from Mrs Garland, & Mrs Garland was in the habit of borrowing from the girl's mother. And as for the demi-woman David, he had been informed as peremptorily as Pharaoh's baker that the office of housemaid & bedmaker was taken

X. latter of which he ~~was obliged to lower~~ instantly lowered, as much from necessity as good manners, (beam in the) the mill-house ceiling having a tendency to smash & ruin all such head-gear without warning

from him, & would be given to this girl till the wedding was over. & Bob's wife took the management into her own hands.

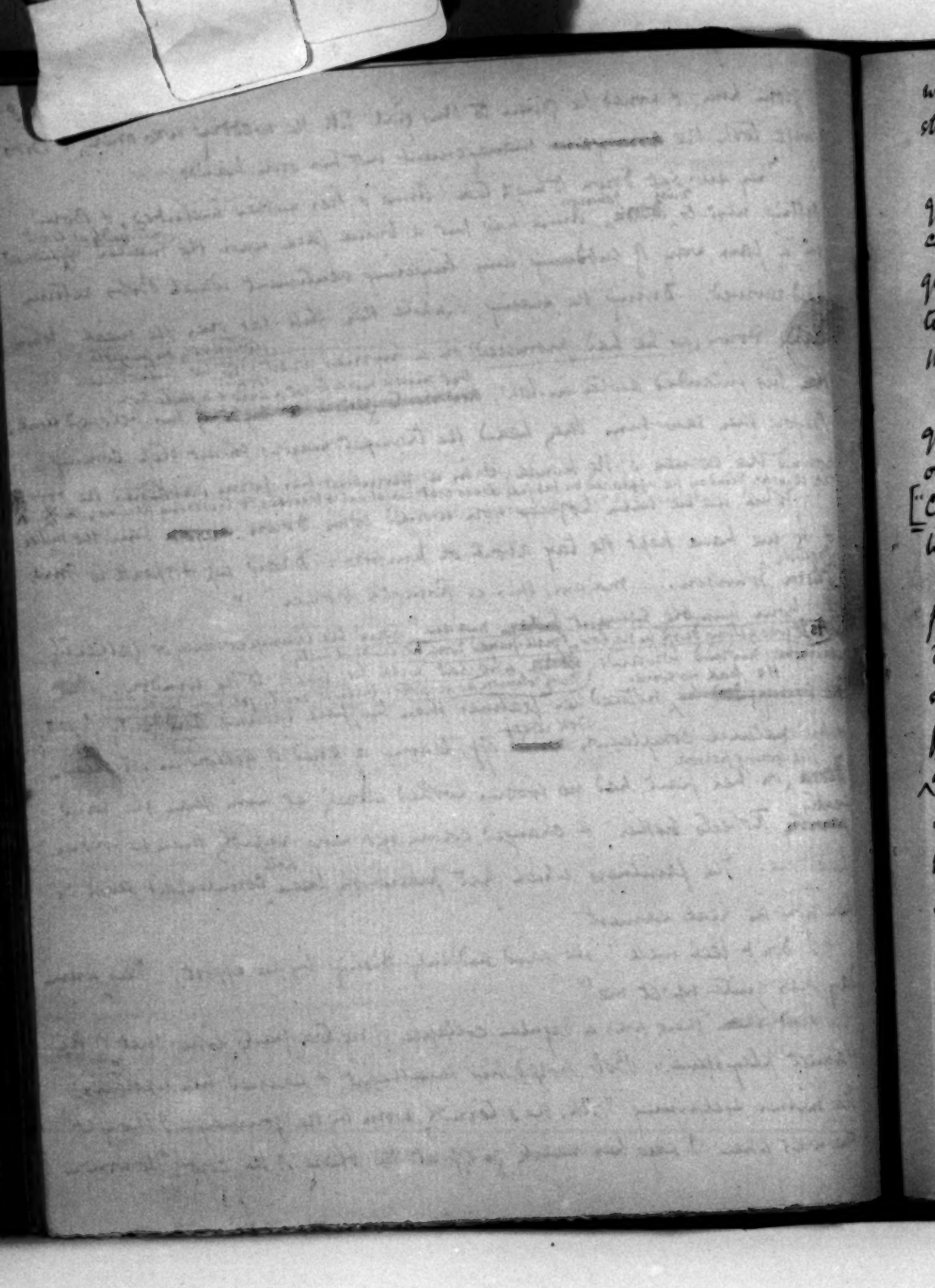
They all sat down to high tea, Anne & her mother included, & Bob sitting next to Miss Johnson. Anne had put a brave face upon the matter, outwardly at least, & seemed in a fair way of subduing any lingering sentiment which Bob's return had revived. During the evening, & while they still sat over the meal, John came down (as he had promised) on a hurried visit, ostensibly on purpose to be introduced to his intended sister-in-law, but much more to get a word & a smile from his beloved Anne. Before they saw him they heard the trumpet-major's smart step coming round the corner of the house, & in a moment his form darkened the door. As it was Sunday he appeared in his full dress coat, waistcoat & breeches, & towering plume, the

"John, we've been hoping you would come down," said the miller; & so we have kept the tay about on purpose. Draw up & speak to Mrs. Matilda Johnson .... ma'am, this is Robert's brother."

"Your humble servant, ma'am," said the trumpet-major gallantly. As it was getting dusk in the low small-paned room he instinctively moved towards Miss Johnson, & she sat with her back to the window. He had no sooner noticed her features than his face became suddenly piped, & his natural complexion took itself off, leaving a kind of yellow in its stead. The young person, on her part, had no sooner looked closely at him than she said weakly "Roberts brother", & changed colour yet more rapidly than the soldier had done. The faintness which had previously been half counterfeit seized on her now in real earnest.

"I don't feel well": she said, suddenly rising by an effort. "This warm day has quite upset me!"

There was a regular collapse of the tea-party, like that of the Hamlet play-scene. Bob seized his sweetheart & carried her upstairs, the miller exclaiming "Ah, she's terribly worn by the journey — I thought she was when I saw her nearly go off at the blare of the cow. No woman



would have been frightened at that if she'd been up to her natural strength."

"That and being so very shy, too. must have made [redacted] handsome added [redacted] Johns regularly quite overpowering to her, poor thing," added Mrs Garland, following the catastrophic young lady upstairs, whose indisposition was this time beyond question. And yet by some perversity of the heart she was as eager now to make light of her faintness as she had been to make much of it two or three hours ago.

The miller & John stood like straight sticks in the room the others had quitted, Johns face being hastily turned towards a caricature of Buonaparte on the wall, that he had not seen more than a hundred & fifty times before. ["Come, sit down & have a cup of tea anyhow," said his father at last. "She'll soon be right again, no doubt."

"Thanks - I don't want any tea" said John quickly. And indeed he did not, for he was in one gigantic ache from head to foot. [The light had been too dim for anybody to notice his amazement, [redacted] & not knowing where to vent it the trumpet-major said he was going out for a minute. He hastened to the bakehouse; but David being there he went to the pantry; but the maid being there he went to the cart-shed; but a couple of tramps being there he went behind a row of french-beans in the garden, where he let off an ejaculation, the most pious that he had uttered on that Sabbath-day. "Heaven, [redacted] - what is to be done!"

And then he walked wildly about the paths of the dusky garden, where the trickling of the brooks seemed loud by comparison with the stillness around, treading recklessly on the cracking snails that had come forth to feed, & [redacted] his spurs in the long grass till the rowels were choked with its blades. Presently he heard another person approaching, & his brother's shape appeared between the stubbard tree & the hedge.

"Oh, it is you, John?" said the mate.

"Yes. I am – taking a little air."

She is getting round nicely again; & as I am not wanted indoors just now I am going into the village to call upon a friend or two I have not been able to speak to as yet; & they are only at home Sundays."

John took his brother Bob's hand – Bob rather wondered why. "All right old boy," he said. "Going into the village: you'll be back again, I suppose, before it gets very late?"

"Oh yes" said Captain Bob cheerfully, & passed out of the garden.

John allowed his eyes to follow his brother till his shape could not be seen; & then he turned & again walked up & down.

End of Part V.

Part VI.

Bell

Chapter XVIII

The night after the arrival.

John continued his sad & heavy pace, till walking seemed too old & worn out a way of showing sorrow so new; & he leant himself against the fork of an appletree like a log. There the trumpet-major remained for a considerable time, his face turned towards the house, whose ancient, many-chimneyed outline rose against the darkening sky, & just shut out from his view the camp above. But faint noises coming thence from horses restless at the pickets reminded him that in consequence of Matilda's arrival he had obtained leave for the night; a fact which, owing to the startling emotions that followed his entry, he had not yet mentioned to his friend.

While abstractedly considering how he could best use that privilege under the new circumstances which had arisen he heard Farmer Derriman drive up to the front door, & hold a conversation with his father. The old man had at last apparently brought the tin box of private papers that he wished the miller to take in charge during Derriman's absence; & it being a calm night John could hear, though he little heeded, Uncle Benjy's reiterated supplications to Loveday to keep it safe from fire & thieves. Then Uncle Benjy left, & John's father went upstairs to deposit the box in a place of security, the whole proceeding reaching John's preoccupied consciousness merely as voices during sleep.

The next thing was the appearance of a light in the bedroom which had been assigned to Matilda Johnson. This effectually aroused the trumpet-major, & with a stealthiness unusual in him he went indoors. No light was in the lower rooms, his father, Mrs Garland, & Anne having gone out on the bridge to look at the new moon. John went upstairs on tiptoe, & along the passage till he came

to her door. It was standing ajar, a band of candlelight shining across the passage & up the opposite wall. As soon as he entered the radiance he saw her. She was standing before the looking-glass, apparently lost in thought, her fingers being clasped behind her head in abstraction, & the light falling full upon her face.

"I must speak to you," said the trumpet-major.

She started, turned & grew paler than before; & moved by a sudden impulse she then, as if moved by a sudden impulse she swung the door wide open, & coming out said quite collectedly, & with apparent pleasantness "Oh yes. You are my Bob's brother — I didn't, for a moment, recognise you."

"But you do now."

"As Bob's brother."

"You have never seen me before?—nor any of the — th Dragoons?"

"Never" she answered with a face as impassible as Talleyrand's

[You mistake — I'll remind you," he said. And he did remind her at some length. "Never!" she said desperately.

[But she had mistaken her man. Five minutes after that she was in tears; & the conversation had resolved itself into words which, on the soldier's part, were of the nature of commands, tempered by intense pity, & were a mere series of entreaties on hers.

The whole scene did not last ten minutes. When it was over the trumpet-major walked from the doorway where they had been standing, & brushed moisture from his eyes. Reaching a dark lumber-room he stood still there to calm himself, & then descended by a Flemish ladder to the bakehouse, instead of by the front stairs. He found that the others, including Bob, had gathered in the parlour during his absence & lighted the candles. [Miss Johnson, having sent down some time before John rendered the house to say that she would prefer to keep her room that evening, the shoeless appeared & to join them, & on this account Bob was shoeless than his customary liveliness. The miller, wishing to keep up his son's spirits expressed his regret that, being Sunday night, they could have no songs to make the evening cheerful, when Miss Garland proposed that they

should sing psalms, which, by choosing lively tunes & not thinking of the words, would be almost as good as ballads.

This they did, the trumpet-major appearing to join in with the rest, but as a matter of fact no sound came from his moving lips. His mind was in such a state that he derived no pleasure even from Anne Garland's presence, though he held a corner of the same book with her, & was treated in a winsome way which it was not her usual practice to indulge in. She saw that his mind was clouded, and far from guessing the reason why, was distressed at last to learn it.

At length the Garlands found that it was time for them to leave, & John Loveday at the same time wished his father & Bob Good-night, & went as far as Mrs Garland's door with her.

He had said not a word to show that he was free to remain out of camp, for the reason that there was painful work to be done, which it would be best to do in secret & alone. He lingered near the house till its reflected window-light ceased to glimmer upon the millpond, & all within the dwelling was dark & still. Then he entered the garden, & waited there till the back door opened, & a woman's figure timorously came forward. John Loveday at once went up to her, & they began to talk in low, yet dissentient tones.

[illegible] a light in the window of the same apartment "You have got me into difficulty," he added gloomily as his father opened the casement.

"I am sorry for that" said Uncle Benjy. But step back – I'll put it all right again.

What for Heaven's sake is the matter? said the miller, his tasseled nightcap appearing in the opening.

"Nothing, nothing," said the farmer I was uneasy about my few bonds & I walked this way, miller, before going to bed, as I start from home to-morrow morning. When I came down by your garden hedge I thought I saw –

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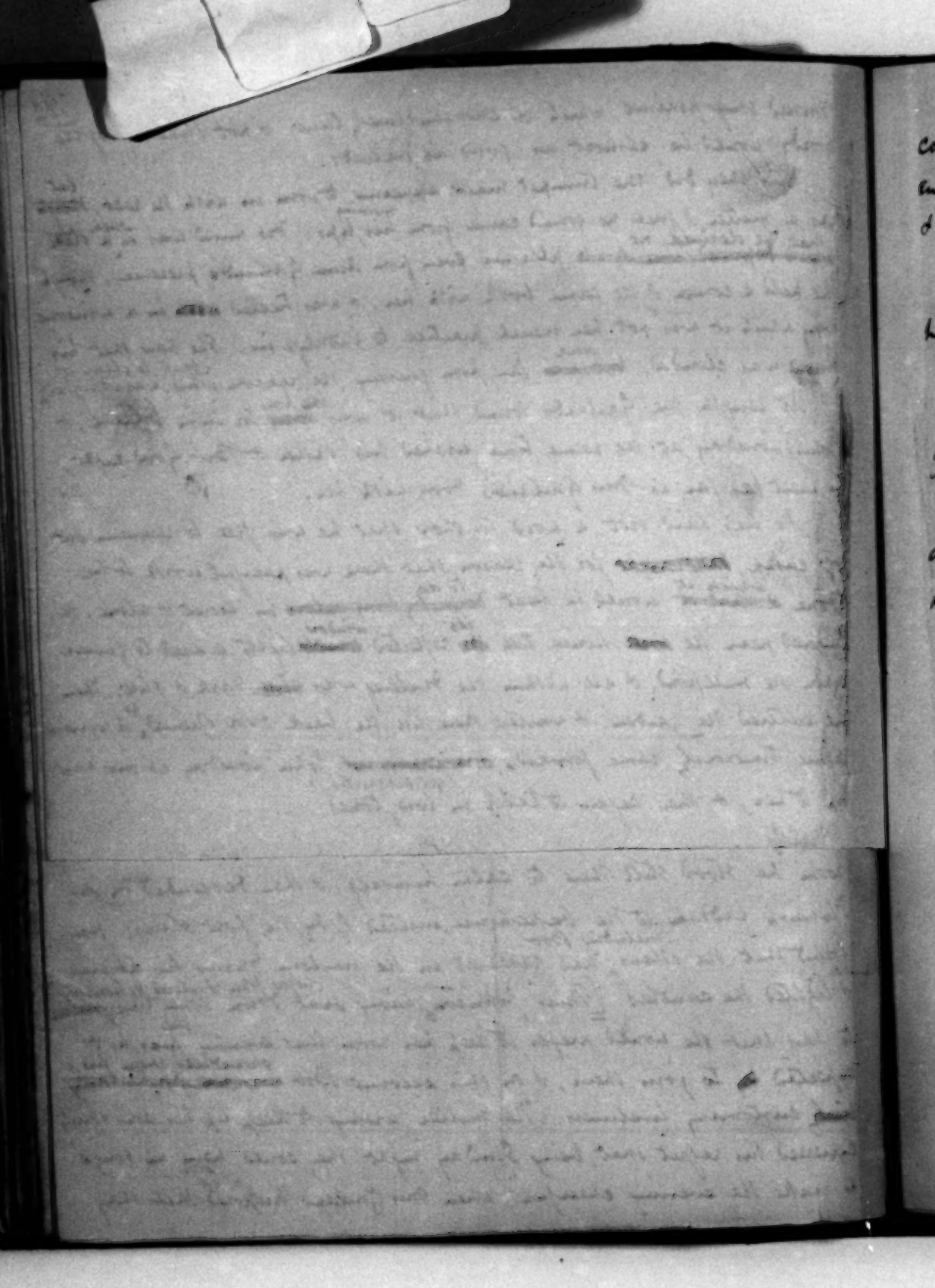

They had conversed about ten minutes, & were parting as if they had come to some painful arrangement, Miss Johnson sobbing bitterly & turning to re-enter the house, when a head stealthily arose above the dense hedgerow, & in a moment a shout burst from its owner.

"Thieves, thieves! My tin box! — Thieves, thieves!"

Matilda vanished into the house, & John Loveday hastened to the hedge. "For God's sake hold your tongue, Mr Derriman," he exclaimed

"My tin box!" said Uncle Benjy. "O — only the — your trumpet-major."

"Your box is safe enough, I assume you. It was only — here the trumpet-major gave vent to an artificial laugh — "only a sly bit of courting, you know."

"Ha-ha. I see!" said the relieved old squireen. "Courting Miss Anne? Then you've ousted my nephew, trumpet-major! Well, so much the better. As for myself the truth on't is that I haven't been able to go to bed easy, for thinking that possibly your father might not take care of what I put under his charge; & at last I thought I would just step over & see if all was safe here before I turned in. And when I saw your two shapes my poor nerves magnified ye to housebreakers & Boneys & I don't know what all.

"You have alarmed the house," said the trumpet-major, hearing the clicking of flint & steel in his father's bedroom, followed by in a moment the rise of a light in the window of the same apartment "You have got me into difficulty," he added gloomily as his father opened the casement.

"I am sorry for that" said Uncle Benjy. But step back — I'll put it all right again.

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thieves, but it turned out to be – to be –

Here a lump of earth from the trumpet-major's hand struck Uncle Benjy in the back as a reminder.

"To be – the bough of a cherry tree a waving in the wind. Good night."

"No thieves are like to try my house," said Miller Loveday. "Now don't you come alarming us like this again, farmer, or you shall keep your box yourself, begging your pardon for saying so. Good night t'ye."

"Miller – will ye just look – since I am here – just look & see if the box is all right? There's a good man. I am old, you know, & my poor remains are not what my original self was. Look & see if it is where you put it – there's a good man."

"Very well", said the miller good humouredly.

"Neighbour Loveday, on second thoughts I think I will take my box home again, after all; if you don't mind. You won't think it ill of me? I have no suspicions, of course; but now I think on't there's rivalry between my nephew & your son; & if Festus should take it into his head to set yer house on fire in his enmity, 'twould be bad for my deeds & documents. No offence, miller; but I'll take the box if you don't mind?"

"Faith I don't mind," said Loveday. "But your nephew had better think twice before he lets his enmity take that colour". Receding from the window he took the candle to a back part of the room, & soon reappeared with the tin box.

"I won't trouble ye to dress", said Derriman considerately. "Let en down by anything you have at hand."

The box was lowered by a cord & the old man clasped it in his arms. "Thank ye," he said, with heartfelt gratitude. "Good-night."

The miller replied, & closed the window; & the light went out.

"There, now I hope you are satisfied, Sir," said the trumpet major

"Quite, quite, said Denniman; & leaning on his walking-stick he pursued his lonely way.

[5 lines]

That night Anne lay awake in her bed, musing on the traits of the new friend who had come to her neighbours home. She would not be critical, it was ungenerous & wrong, but she could not help thinking of what interested her; & were there. She silently asked, in Miss Johnsons mind & person such rare qualities as placed that lady altogether beyond comparison with herself? Oh yes, there must be, for had not Captain Bob singled out Matilda from among all other women, herself included? Of course with his world-wide experience he knew best.

When the moon had set, & only the summer stars threw their light into the great damp garden she fancied that the heard voices in that direction. Perhaps they

were the voices of Bob & Matilda taking a lover's walk before retiring. If so how sleepy they would be next day, & how ~~astonished~~ attend it was of Matilda to pretend she was tired. Ruminating in this way, & saying to herself that she hoped they would be happy, Anne fell asleep.

Chapter XIX.

~~[illegible]~~ Miss Johnson's behaviour caused no little surprise Partly from the excitement ~~[illegible]~~ of having his Matilda under the paternal roof Bob rose next morning as early as his father & the grinder, & went to stir himself outside the mill pond, among the fowls of brown & speckled kinds which haunted that spot, & the ducks that came up from the mill tail.

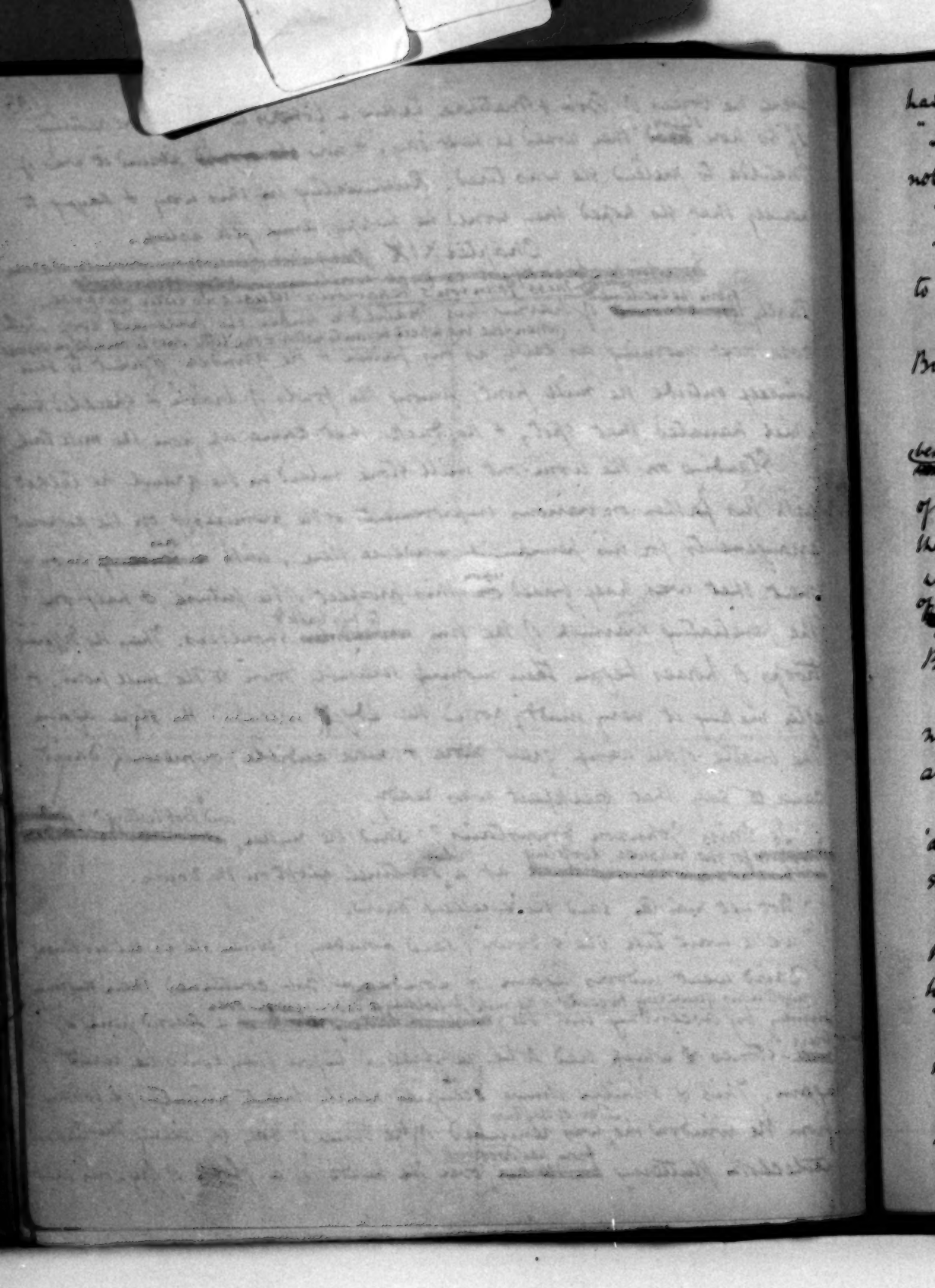
Standing on the worn-out mill-stone inlaid in the gravel he talked with his father on various improvements of the premises, & on the proposed arrangements for his permanent residence here, with an enjoyment that was half based upon this prospect of the future, & half on the penetrating warmth of the sun to his back & shoulders. Then the different troops of horses began their morning scramble down to the mill pond, & after making it very muddy round the edge ascended the slope again. The bustle of the camp grew more & more audible; & presently David came to say that breakfast was ready.

"Is Miss Johnson downstairs?" said the miller, and Bob listened for the answer, looking at a blue sentinel aloft on the down.

"Not yet, maister," said the excellent David.

"We'll wait till she's down," said Loveday. "When she is, let us know."

David went indoors again, & Loveday & Bob continued their morning amusement by ascending into the mysterious quivering recesses of the mill, & holding a discussion over a second pair of buzz-stones, which had to be re-dressed before they could be used again. This & similar things occupied nearly twenty minutes, & looking from the window the elder of the two was reminded of the time of day by seeing Mrs Garland's tablecloth fluttering from her door back over the heads of a flock of pigeons that



had alighted for the crumbs.

"I suppose David can't find us", he said, with a sense of hunger that was not altogether strange to Bob. He put out his head & shouted.

"The lady is not down yet." said his man in reply.

"No hurry, no hurry", said the miller with cheerful emptiness. "Bob, to pass the time we'll look into the garden."

"She'll get up sooner than this, you know, when she's living here." observed Bob, apologetically

"Yes, yes", said Loveday; & they descended into the garden.

Here they turned over sundry flat stones, & killed the slugs sheltered beneath them from the coming heat of the day, talking of slugs in all their branches; of the brown & the black, of the tough & the tender, of the reason why there were so many in the garden that year, of the coming time when the grass walks harbouring them were to be taken up, & gravel laid, & of the relative exterminatory merits of a pair of scissors & the heel of the shoe. At last the miller said "Well, really Bob, I'm hungry. We must begin without her."

They were about to go in when David appeared with haste in his motions, his eyes wider vertically than crossways, & his cheeks nearly all gone.

"Maister, I've been to call her; & as 'a didn't speak I rapped, & as 'a didn't answer I kicked, & not being latched the door opened, and — she's gone!"

Bob went off like a swallow towards the house, & the miller followed like the rather heavy man that he was. That Miss Matilda was not in her room, or a scrap of anything belonging to her, was soon apparent. They searched every place in which she could possibly hide or squeeze herself, every place in which she could not; but found nothing at all.

Captain Bob was quite wild with astonishment & grief. When he was quite sure that she was nowhere in his father's house he ran into Mrs Garland's, & telling them the story so hastily that they hardly under-

stood the particulars he went on towards Comfort's house, intending to raise the alarm there & also at Mitchells, Beach's, Cripplestraw's, the parson's, the clerk's, the camp of dragoons, of Hussars; & so on through the whole county. But he paused, & thought it would be hardly expedient to publish his discomfiture in such a way. If Matilda had left the house for any freakish reason he would not care to look for her; & if her deed had a tragic intent she would keep aloof from camp & village.

In his trouble he thought of Anne. She was a nice girl, & could be trusted. To her he went, & found her in a state of excitement & anxiety which equalled his own.

his forehead all in wrinkles.

"'Tis so lonely to look for her all by myself!" said Bob, disconsolately. "And I've thought you would come with me & cheer the way?"

"Where shall we look?" said Anne

"Oh, in the holes of rivers, you know, & down wells & in quarries, & over cliffs, & like that. Your eyes might catch sight of any bit of a shawl or bonnet that I should overlook, & it would do me a real service." Please do come!

the miller & David having gone off in another direction.

So Anne took pity upon him, & put on her hat & went. They examined the ditches of fields, Bob going round by one fence & Anne by the other till they met at the opposite side. Then they peeped under culverts, into outhouses, & down old wells & quarries, till the theory of a tragical end had nearly spent its force in Bob's mind, & he began to think that Matilda had simply run away. However they still walked on, though by this time the sun was hot & Anne would gladly have sat down.

"Now didn't you think highly of her, Miss Garland?" he enquired as the search began to languish.

"Oh yes," said Anne. "Very highly."

"She was really beautiful; no nonsense about her looks, was there?"

"None.... Her beauty was thoroughly ripe – not too young. We should all have got to love her – what can have possessed her to go away!"

"I don't know, & upon my life I shall soon be driven to say I don't care" replied the mate despairingly. "Let me hand you down over those stones" he added, as Anne began to descend a rugged quarry. ~~he had kept down before her~~ He stepped forward & kept down & turned to her.

She gave him her hand & sprang down. & Before he relinquished his hold Captain Bob raised her fingers to his lips & kissed them.

"Oh, Captain Loveday!" cried Anne snatching away her hand in genuine dismay, while a tear rose unexpectedly to each eye. "I never heard of such a thing — I won't go an inch further with you Sir — it is too barefaced!" And she turned & ran off.

"Upon my life I didn't mean it!" said the repentant sailor, hasting after. "I do love her best — indeed I do — & I don't love you at all. I am not so fickle as that. I merely just for the moment admired you as a romantic spectacle, & that's how I came to do it!.... ~~Poor Matilda I came I [illegible] he continued with~~ ~~[illegible] "he continued [illegible]~~ ~~[illegible]~~ You know, Miss Garland," he continued earnestly, "'tis like this: when you come ashore after having been shut up in a ship for eighteen months, women-folks seem so new, & nice that you can't help liking them all, but of course I think of Poor Matilda most, & shall always stick to her." He heaved a sigh of tremendous magnitude, to show beyond the possibility of doubt that his heart was still in the right place that honour required.

"I am glad to hear that — of course I am very glad!" said she with quick petulance, keeping her face turned from him. "And I hope we shall find her, & that the wedding will not be put off, & that you'll both be happy.... But I won't look for her any more — no, I don't care to look for her; & my head aches; & I am going home!"

"And so am I," said Robert promptly.

No, no! Go on looking for her, of course — all the afternoon, & all night. I am sure you will, if you love her."

"Still, I ought to see you home first. (Oh yes, I mean to.)

"No, you ought not; & I shall not accept your company. Good morning, sir." And she went off over one of the stone stiles with which the spot abounded, leaving the friendly sailor standy in the field.

He sighed again, & observing the camp not far off thought he would go to his brother John, & ask him his opinion on the sorrowful case. On reaching the tents he found that John was not at liberty just at that time, being engaged in practising the trumpeters; & leaving word that he wished the trumpet-major to come down to the mill as soon as possible Bob went back again.

"'Tis no good looking for her," he said gloomily. She liked me well enough, but when she came here & saw the house, & the place, & the old horse, & the plain furniture, she was disappointed to find us all so homely, & felt she didn't care to marry into such a family!"

His father & David had returned, with no news. "Yes, 'tis as I've been thinking, father," Bob said. "We wesn't good enough for her; & she went away in scorn."

"Well, that can't be helped," said the miller. "What we be, we be, & have been for generations. To my mind she seemed glad enough to get hold of us."

"Yes, yes — for the moment — because of the flowers, & birds, & what's pretty in the place," said Bob tragically. "But you don't know, father — how should you know, who have hardly been out of Overcombe in your life? — you don't know what delicate feelings are in a real refined woman's mind. Any little vulgar action cuts their nerves like a knife. Now I wonder if you did anything to disgust her."

"Faith, not that I know of," said Loveday, reflecting with concern. "I didn't say a single thing that I should naturally have said, on purpose to give no offence.

"You was always very homely, you know, father."

"Yes, so I was," said the miller meekly.

"I wonder what it could have been." Bob continued, wandering about restlessly. "You didn't go drinking out of the big mug with your mouth full, or wipe your lips with your sleeve?"

"That I'll swear I did n't," said the miller firmly. "Thinks I, there's no knowing what I may do to shock her, so I'll take my solid victuals in the bakehouse, & only a crumb & a drop in her company for manners."

"You could do no more than that, certainly," said Bob gently.

"If my manners be good enough for well brought up people like the Garlands, they be good enough for her", continued the miller with a sense of injustice.

"That's true. Then it must have been David. – David! come here. How did you behave before that lady? Now mind you speak the truth."

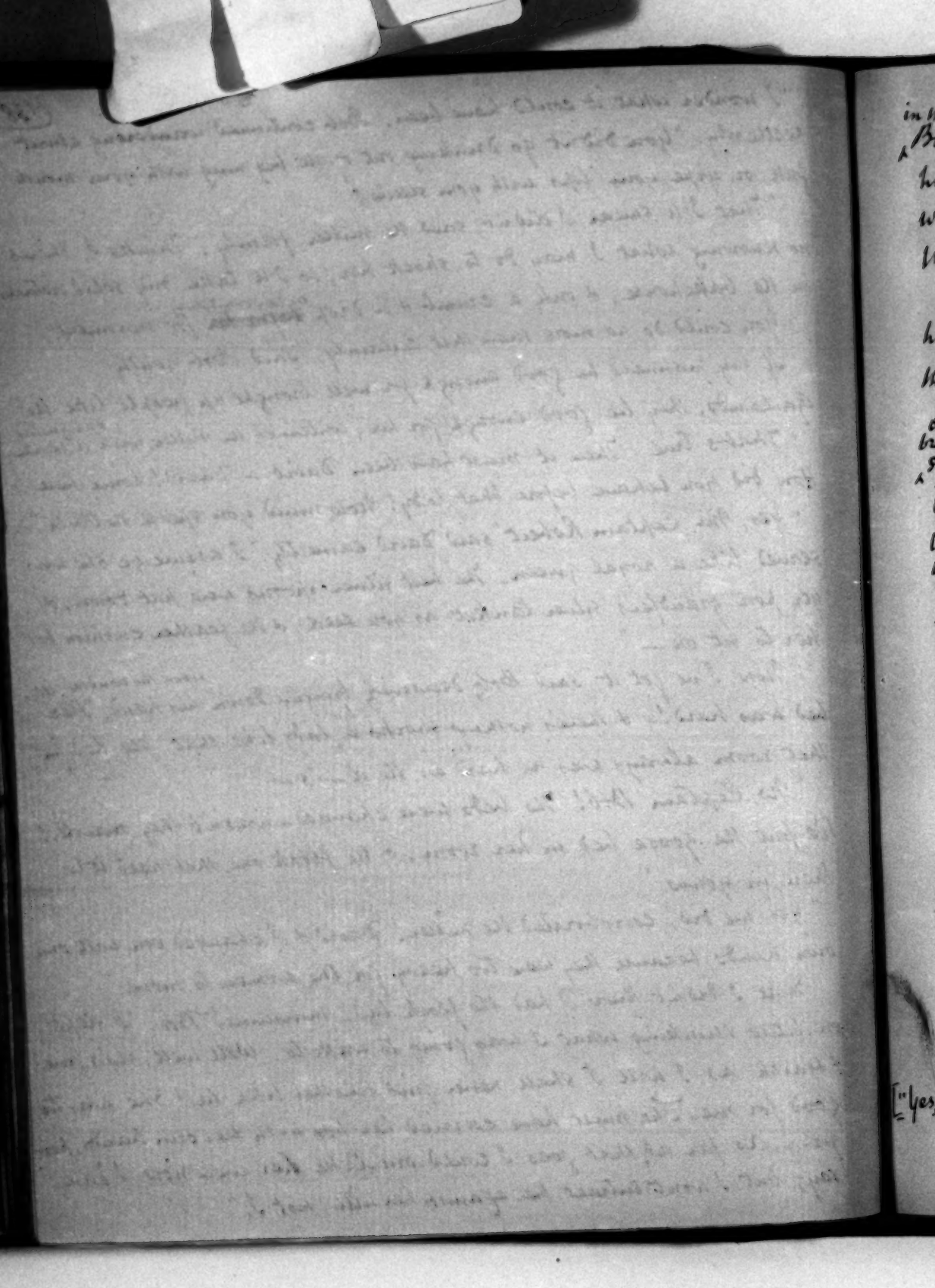
"Yes, Mr. Captain Robert," said David earnestly. "I assure ye she was served like a royal queen. The best silver spoons were put down, & yer poor grandfer's silver tanket as you used, & the feather cushion for her to sit on –"

"Now I've got it," said Bob, decisively bringing down his hand upon the window-sill, "Her bed was hard! – & there's nothing shocks a true lady like that. The bed in that room always was as hard as the d—'s –"

"No, Captain Bob! The beds were changed – was n't they maister? We put the goose bed in her room, & the flock one, that used to be there, in yours."

"Yes, we did," corroborated the miller. "David & I changed 'em with our own hands, because they were too heavy for the women to move."

"Sure I did n't know I had the flock bed," murmured Bob. "I slept on, little thinking what I was going to wake to. Well well, she's gone; & search as I will I shall never find another like her! She was too good for me. She must have carried her box with her own hands, poor girl. As far as that goes I could overtake her even now, I dare say; but I won't entreat her against her will, not I."



Miller Loveday & David, feeling themselves to be rather a desecration in the presence of Bob's tender emotions, managed to edge off by degrees; the former burying himself in the most floury recesses of the mill, his invariable resource when perturbed, the rumbling having a soothing effect upon the nerves of those properly trained to its music

Bob was so impatient that, after going up to her room to assure himself once more that she had not undressed, but had only lain down on the outside of the bed, he went out of the house to meet John, & waited on the sunny slope of the down till his brother appeared. John looked so shapely & manlike that even in Bob's present distress he could not but feel an honest & affectionate pride at owning such a relative, yet he fancied that John did not come along with the same swinging step as he had shown yesterday; & when the trumpet major got nearer he looked anxiously at the mate, & waited for him to speak first.

"You know our great trouble, John?" said Robert, looking stonically into his brother's eyes.

Come & sit down, & tell me all about it" answered the trumpet-major, showing no surprise.

They went towards a slight ravine where it was easier to sit down than on the flat ground, & here John reclined among the grasshoppers, pointing to his brother to do the same.

"But do you know what it is?" said Robert. "Has anybody told ye?"

"I do know," said John." She's gone; & I am thankful.

"What?" said Bob, rising to his knees in amazement

"I'm at the bottom of it all," said the trumpet-major slowly. "You, John?"

"Yes; & if you will listen I'll tell you all..... Do you remember what happened when I came into the room last night? Why, she turned colour, & nearly fainted away. That was because she knew me."

Bob stared at his brother with a face of pain & distrust.

"For once, Bob, I must say something that will hurt thee a good deal," continued John. "She was not a woman who could possibly be your wife. And so she's gone."

"You sent her off?"

"Well, I did."

"John! Tell me right through — tell me!"

"Perhaps I had better," said the trumpet-major, his blue eyes resting on the far distant sea that seemed to rise like a wall as high as the hill they sat upon. [And then he told a tale (of Miss Johnson & the 7th Dragoons) which wrung her heart as much in the telling as it did Bob's to hear, & which showed that John had been temporarily cruel to be ultimately kind. Even Bob, excited as he was, could discern from John's manner of speaking what a terrible undertaking that night's business had been for him. To justify the course he had adopted the dictates of duty must have been imperative; but the trumpet-major, with a becoming reticence which his brother at the time was naturally unable to appreciate, scarcely dwelt distinctly enough upon the compelling cause of his conduct. It would indeed have been hard for any man much less so modest a one as John to do himself justice in that remarkable relation, when the listener was the lady's lover; & it is no wonder that Robert rose to his feet, & put a greater distance between himself & John.

"And what time was it?" he asked in a hard, suppressed voice.

"It was just before one o'clock."

"How could you help her to go away?"

"I had a pass. I carried her box to the coach-office. She was to follow at dawn."

"But she had no money?" (John did not add, as he might have done, that he had given her, in his pity, all the money he possessed & at present had only eighteen-pence in the world particular care of that. Well, it is over.)

"Yes she had. I took

Bob, sit ye down, & talk with me of old times," he added.

"Ah Jack, it is well enough for you to speak like that," said the disquieted sailor. "But I can't help feeling that it is a cruel thing you have

done. After all, she would have been good enough for me. Would to the Lord I had never found out this about her. John, why did you interfere? You had no right to interfere in my affairs like this. Why didn't you tell me fairly all you knew, & let me do as I chose? You have turned her out of the house, & it's a shame. If she had only come to me! Why didn't she!"

"Because she knew it was best to do otherwise."

"Well, I shall go after her," said Bob firmly.

"You can do as you like," said John. "But I would advise you strongly to leave matters where they are."

"I won't leave matters where they are," said Bob impetuously. "You have made me miserable, & all for nothing. I tell you she was good enough for me, & ~~as long as I knew~~ nothing about what you say, what difference would it have made, to me? Never was there a young woman who was better company; & she loved a merry song as I do myself. Yes; I'll follow her."

"Oh Bob," said John. "I hardly expected this!"

"That's because you did'nt know your man. Can I ask you to do me one kindness — ~~not~~ (I don't suppose I can — Can I ask you not to) say a word against her to any of them at home?

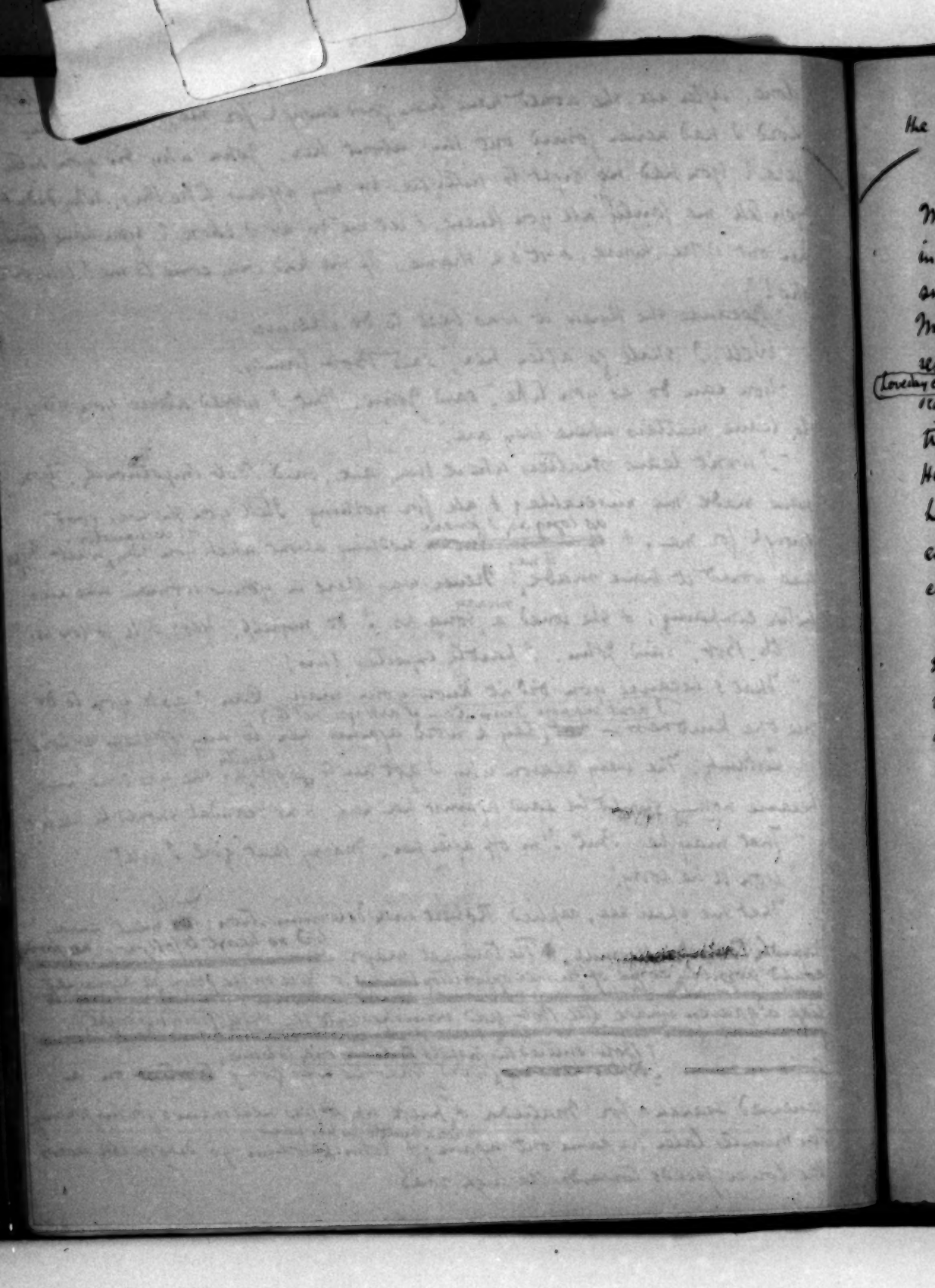
"Certainly. The very reason why I got her to go off silently as she has done was because nothing should be said against her here, & no scandal should be heard of."

"That may be. But I'm off after her. Marry that girl I will!"

"You'll be sorry."

"That we shall see, replied Robert with determination; & he went away rapidly towards the mill. ~~The trumpet major had no heart to follow — no good could possibly come of further opposition now, & there on the floor she remained like a graven image till Bob had vanished from the mill from his sight.~~

~~[Bob entered his father's only to leave word that he was going on a~~ renewed search for Matilda & to pack up a few necessaries for his journey. Ten minutes later he came out again, with a bundle in his hand, & John saw him go diagonally across the lower fields towards the high road



(musingly readjusting his stock where it cut his neck,)
"And this is all the good I have done!" said John ~~Ga~~ and descended towards the mill.

Chapter XX

How they lessened the effect of the calamity.

Meanwhile Anne Garland had gone home, & being weary with her search in search of Matilda sat silent in a corner of the room. Her mother was passing the time in giving utterance to every conceivable surmise on the cause of Miss Johnson's disappearance that the human mind could frame, to which Anne returned monosyllabic answers — the result not of indifference but of intense preoccupation. Presently (Lovelady came to the door; her mother vanished with him; & they remained closeted together a long time. Anne) ~~She~~ went into the garden & seated herself beneath the blanching tree whose boughs had sheltered her during so many hours of her residence here. Her attention was fixed more upon the miller's wing of the irregular building before her than upon that occupied by her mother, for she could not help expecting every moment to see some one run out with a wild face & announce some awful clearing up of the mystery.

Every sound set her on the alert, & hearing the tread of a horse in the lane she looked round eagerly. Gazing at her over the hedge was Festus Derriman, mounted on such an incredibly tall animal that he could see her to her very feet over the ~~dense~~ thick & broad thorn fence. She no sooner recognized him than she withdrew her ~~gaze~~ glance, but as his eyes were fixed steadily upon her this was a futile manoeuvre.

"I saw you look round!" he exclaimed crossly. "What have I done to make you behave like that? Come Miss Garland; be fair. 'Tis no use to turn your back upon me." As she did not turn he went on "Well now, this is enough to provoke a saint in heaven. Now I tell you what, Miss Garland. Here I'll stay till you do turn round, if 'tis all the afternoon. You know my temper: what I say I mean." He seated himself firmly in the saddle, plucked some leaves from the hedge, & began humming a song, to show how absolutely indifferent he was to the flight of time.

"What have you come for, that you are so anxious to see me?" inquired

Anne, when at last he had wearied her patience, rising & facing him with the added independence which came from a sense of the hedge between them.

"There, I knew you would turn round," he said, his hot angry face invaded by a smile in which his teeth showed like white hemmed in by red at chess.

"What do you want Mr Derriman?" said she.

"'What do you want Mr Derriman?' — now listen to that! Is that my encouragement?"

Anne bowed superciliously, & moved away. (eyeing her movements with somnolent irascibility.)

"I have just heard news that explains all that," said Festus. "My uncle has been letting things out. He was here late last night, & he saw you.

"Indeed he didn't," said Anne.

"Oh now! He saw you & Trumpet-major Loveday courting in that garden walk. And when he came you ran indoors."

"It is not true, & I wish to hear no more."

"Upon my soul he said so. How can you do it, Miss Garland, when I who have enough money to buy up all the Lovedays would gladly come to terms with ye? what a simpleton you must be to pass me over for him! There, now you are angry because I said simpleton: I didn't mean simpleton; I meant misguided — misguided ~~[illegible]~~ rosebud. That's it — run off," he continued in a raised voice as Anne made towards the garden door. "But I'll have you yet. Much reason you have to be too proud to stay with me. But it won't last long. I shall marry you, madam, if I choose, as you'll see."

When he was quite gone, & Anne had calmed down from the not altogether unrelished fear & excitement that he always caused her, she returned to her seat under the tree, & began to wonder what Festus Derriman's story meant, which, from the earnestness of his tone, did not seem like a pure invention. It suddenly flashed upon her mind that she herself had heard voices in the garden, & that the persons seen by Farmer Derriman, of whose visit & reclamation of his box the miller had told

her, might have been Matilda & John Loveday. She further recalled the strange agitation of Miss Johnson on the ~~evening~~ preceding evening, & that it occurred just at the entry of the dragoon, till by degrees suspicion amounted to conviction that he knew more than anyone else supposed of that ladys disappearance.

It was just at this time that the trumpet-major descended to the mill after his talk with his brother on the down. As fate would have it, instead of entering the house he turned aside to the garden, & walked down that pleasant enclosure to learn if he were likely to find in the other half of it the woman he loved so well.

Yes, there she was, sitting on the seat of logs that he had repaired for her, under the appletree; But she was not facing in his direction. He walked with a noisier tread; he coughed; he shook a bough; he did everything, in short, but the one thing that Festus did in the same circumstances; ~~he did not~~ call out to her. He would not have ventured ~~to~~ on that ~~do~~ for the world. ~~Most~~ Any of his signs would have been sufficient to attract her a day or two earlier; now she would not turn. At last in his fond anxiety he ~~ventured~~ did what he had never done before without an invitation, & crossed over into Mrs Garland's half of the garden till he stood before her.

When she could not escape him she arose, & saying "Good afternoon trumpet-major," in a glacial manner unusual with her, walked away to another part of the garden.

Loveday, quite at a loss, had not the strength of mind to persevere further. He had a vague ~~foreboding~~ apprehension that some imperfect knowledge of the previous nights unhappy business had reached her; & unable to remedy the evil without telling more than he dared, he went into the mill, where his father still was, looking doleful enough, what with his concern at events, & the extra quantity of flour upon his face through sticking so closely to business that day.

"Well, John. Bob has told you all, of course. A queer strange perplexing

thing, is it it? I can't make it out at all. ~~I haven't been so upset for years~~. There must be something wrong in the woman, or it couldn't have happened. I haven't been so upset for years."

"Nor have I. I wouldn't it should have happened for all I own in the world" said the dragoon, ~~bound by Bob~~ "Have you spoke to Anne Gaylard to-day - or has anybody been talking to her?"

"Fortus Derriman rode by half an hour ago, & talked to her over the hedge." John guessed the rest, & ~~went~~ after standing on the threshold in silence awhile, walked away towards the camp.

All this time his brother Robert had been hastening along in pursuit of the ~~former~~ woman who had withdrawn from the scene to avoid the exposure & complete overthrow which would have resulted had she remained. As the distance lengthened between himself & the mill Bob was conscious of some cooling down of the excitement that had prompted him to set out, but he did not pause in his walk till he had reached the head of the river which fed the mill stream. Here, for some indefinite reason, he allowed his eyes to be attracted by the bubbling spring whose waters never failed or lessened, & he stopped as if to look longer at the ~~spot~~ scene; it was really because his mind was so absorbed by John's story. The sun was ~~rapidly sinking~~ warm, the spot was a pleasant one, & he deposited his bundle & sat down. By degrees as he reflected, first on John's view & then on his own, his convictions became unsettled, till at length he was so balanced between the impulse to go on & the impulse to go back that a puff of wind either way would have been well-nigh sufficient to decide for him. When he allowed John's story to repeat itself in his ears, the reasonableness & good sense of his advice seemed beyond question. When, on the other hand, he thought of his poor Matilda's eyes & her, to him, pleasant ways, their charming arrangements to many, & her probable willingness still, he could hardly bring himself to do otherwise than follow on the road at the top of his speed.

This stripe of thought was so well maintained that, sitting & standing, he remained on the borders of the spring till the shadows had stretched out eastward considerably, & the chance of overtaking Matilda hedgrown considerably less. Still he did not positively go towards home. At last he took a guinea from his pocket, & resolved to put the question to the Lazarus. "Heads I go: tails I don't." The piece of gold spun in the air & came down heads.

"No, I won't go after all," he said. "I won't be ruled by accidents any more."

He picked up his bundle & switch, & retraced his steps towards Overcombe Mill, knocking down the brambles & nettles as he went with gloomy & indifferent blows. When he got within sight of the house he beheld David in the road.

"I've been out looking for ye, Captain," said that retainer. "Have you been able to hear anything of her?"

"Nothing."

"Well, it is of no consequence at all, & no harm will be done. Maister & Mrs Garland have made up a match, & mean to marry at once, that the wedding victuals may not be wasted. They felt 'twould be a thousand pities to let such good things go blue-vinnied for want of a ceremony to use 'em upon, & at last they have thought of this."

"Victuals – I don't care for the victuals," said Bob in a tone of far higher thought. He went on to the house, an interest in the announcement growing up in his mind in spite of his assertion of indifference. His father appeared in the opening of the mill door, looking more cheerful than when they had parted. "What, Robert, you've been after her?" he said. "Egith, then, I wou[illegible] have gallopped her if I had been as sure as you were that she went away in scorn of us. Since you told me that I have not looked for her at all."

"[illegible] It is a excellent thought, father."

"Yes. I've felt more calm and [illegible]

I was wrong father, Bob replied, throwing down his bundle & stick gravely.
"~~Yes father, he said.~~ Matilda, I find has not ~~done anything dreadful~~ gone away in scorn of us.
~~Generally~~ She has gone away ~~for other reasons.~~. I followed her some way; but I have come back again: She may go."

"Why is she gone?" said the astonished miller.

Bob had intended, for Matilda's sake, to give no reason to a living soul for her departure. But he could not treat his father thus reservedly; told. & he

"She has made great fools of us," said the miller deliberately. "and she might have made us greater ones. Bob, I thought th'had'st more sense!"
~~'Twas a brackle bit, & there's an end out.~~

"Well, don't say anything against her, father," implored Bob. Let her down quietly, & keep the secret. You promise that?"

"I do." Loveday remained thinking awhile, & then went on, "Well, what I was going to say is this: I've hit upon a plan to get out of the awkward corner she has put us in. What you'll think of it I can't say."

"David has just given me the leads ~~of it~~."

"And do it hurt your feelings, my son, at such a time?"

No. I'll bring myself to bear it, anyhow. Why should I object to other peoples happiness ~~as~~ because I have lost my own? said Bob, with saintly self sacrifice in his air.

"Well said!" answered the miller heartily. "But you may be sure that there will be no unseemly rejoicing, to disturb ~~you~~ ye in your present frame of mind. ~~All~~ the morning I felt more ashamed than I cared to own at the thought of how the neighbours great & small would laugh at what they would call your folly & mine, when they knew what had happened, so I resolved to take this step to stave it off, if so be 'twas possible. And when I saw Mrs Garland I knew I had done right. She pitied me so much for having had the house cleaned in vain, & laid in provisions to waste, & that it put her into the humour to agree. We mean to do it right off at once, afore the pies & cakes get mouldy, & the blackpot stale.... 'Twas a good thought of mine & hers, & I am glad 'tis settled," he concluded cheerfully.

"Poor Matilda!" murmured Bob.

"There – I was afraid 'twould hurt thy feelings!" said the miller with self-reproach. "Making preparations for thy wedding, & using them for my own!"

"No," said Bob heroically. "It shall not. It will be a great comfort in my sorrow to feel that the splendid grub, & the drink, & your stunning new suit of clothes, & the great table-cloths you've bought, & all the rest of it, will be just as useful now as if I had married myself. (Poor Matilda!) But you won't expect me to join in – you hardly can. I can go away that day very easily you know."

"Nonsense Bob!" said the miller reproachfully.

"I couldn't stand it. I should break down."

"D – dif I would have asked her, then, if I had known 'twas going to drive thee out of the house! Now come Bob, I'll find a way of arranging it, & sobering it down, so that it shall be as melancholy as (you can require. In short, as just like) a funeral, if thou'lt promise to stay?"

"Very well," said the young man. "On that condition I'll stay."

Chapter XXI.

The departure of the dragoons.

Having entered into this solemn compact with his son, the elder Loveday's next action was to go to Mrs Garland, & ask her how the toning down of the wedding had best be done. "It is plain enough that to make merry just now would be slighting Bob's feelings, as if he didn't care who was not married, so long as we were," he said. "But then, what's to be done about the victuals?"

"Give a dinner to the poor folk," she suggested. "We can get everything used up that way."

"That's true," said the miller. "There's enough of 'em in these times to carry off any extras whatsoever."

And it will spare Bob's feelings wonderfully.

"~~Bob can't be reconciled by that~~. And they won't know that the dinner

was got for another sort of wedding & another sort of guests; so you'll leave their good will for nothing."

The miller smiled at the subtlety of the view. "That can hardly be called fair," he said. "Still, I did mean some of it for them, for the friends he meant to ask would not have cleared ~~completely~~ all."

Upon the whole the idea pleased him well. particularly when he noticed the forlorn look of his sailor son as he walked about the place, & ~~felt~~ pictured the inevitably ~~that remembered the~~ jarring effect ~~that~~ of fiddles ~~must have~~ & tambourines upon Bob's shattered nerves ~~must~~ at such a crisis, even if the notes ~~of the former~~ were dulled by the application of a mute. He therefore told Bob that the surcharged larder was to be emptied by the charitable process above alluded to, & hoped he would not mind making himself useful in such a good & gloomy work. Bob readily fell in with the scheme; & it was at once put in hand, & the tables spread.

& Bob shut up in a distant bedroom – a plan which had at first seemed to him.

The alacrity ~~celerity~~ with which the substituted wedding was carried out seemed to show that the worthy pair of neighbours would have joined themselves into one long ago, had there previously occurred any domestic incident dictating such a step as an apposite expedient ~~to take~~ apart from their personally wish to marry.

at the cheerful hour of ten.

The appointed morning came, & the service quietly took place in the face of a triangular congregation of which the base was the front pew, & the apex the west door. Mrs Garland dressed herself in ~~her costly~~ plum coloured gown, the muslin shawl like Queen Charlotte's, that Bob had brought home, & her best beneath which peeped out her shoes with red rosettes. Anne was present, but considerately toned herself down so as not to ~~interfere with~~ too seriously damage during the ceremony her mother's appearance. She had a distressing sense that she ought not to be born, ~~yet during~~ & was glad to get home again.

The interest excited in the village, though real, was hardly enough

to cause a serious blush. ~~It~~ Neighbours minds had become so saturated by the abundance of showy military & regal incident lately vouchsafed to them that a wedding of middle-aged civilians was of small account, ~~excepting in so far as it solved the question~~ ~~[illegible]~~ excepting in so far that it solved the question whether or not Mrs Garland would consider herself too genteel to mate with a ~~miller~~ grinder of corn.

In the evening ~~Mrs~~ Loveday's heart was made glad by seeing the baked & boiled in rapid process of consumption by the kitchen full of people assembled for that purpose. Three quarters of an hour were sufficient to banish for ever his fears as to spoilt food, the provisions being the cause of the assembly & not its consequence. It had been determined to get all that would not keep consumed on that day, even if hedges & byways had to be searched for operators. And in addition to the poor & needy, every cottager's daughter known to the miller was invited & told to bring her lover for company, an expedient which, for letting daylight into the inside of platters was among the most happy ever known.

While Mr & Mrs Loveday, Anne, & Bob, standing in the parlour, discussing the progress of the entertainment, John, who had not been down all day, in the next room, entered the house & ~~stood at the door~~ looked in upon them through the open door.

"How's this John? Why didn't you come before?"

"Had to see the captain, & other duties," said the trumpet-major in a tone which showed no great zeal for explanations.

"Well, come in, however", continued the miller, as his son remained with his hand on the door post, surveying them reflectively.

"I cannot stay long," said John, advancing. "The route is come; and we are going away."

"Going away — where to?"

"To Exeter."

"When?"

"Friday morning."

"All of you?" "Yes, some to-morrow, & some next day. The king goes next week."

"I am sorry for this," said the miller, not expressing half his sorrow

X. Next summer perhaps we shall come & camp here again."
"I hope so", said his father & Mrs Loveday.

by the simple utterance. "I wish you could have been here to-day, since this is the case," he added, looking at the horizon through the window.

Mrs. Loveday also expressed her regret, which seemed to remind the trumpet-major of the event of the day, & he went to her & tried to say something befitting the occasion. Anne had not said that she was either sorry or glad, but John Loveday fancied that she had looked rather relieved than otherwise when she heard his news. His conversation with Bob on the down made Bob's manner, too, remarkably cool, notwithstanding that he had after all followed his brother's advice, which it was as yet too soon after the event for him to rightly value. John did not know why the sailor had come back, ~~never supposing~~ supposing it was because that he had thought better of going, & said to him privately "You didn't overtake her?"

"I did not try to," said Bob.

"And you are not going to?"

"No. I shall let her go."

"I am glad indeed, Bob. You have been wise," said John heartily.

Bob however still loved Mathilda too well to be other than dissatisfied with ~~Loveday~~ John, & the events ~~in general~~ that he had precipitated, which the elder brother only too promptly perceived; & it made his stay that evening of short duration. Before leaving he said with some hesitation to his father, including Anne & her mother by his glance:

"Do you think to come up & see us off?"

The miller ~~said~~ answered for them all & said that of course they would come. "But you'll step down again between now & then? he inquired.

"I'll try to." He added after a pause; "In case I should not, remember that Reveay will sound at half-past five. We shall leave about eight."

There was something in John's manner which indicated to Anne that he scarcely intended to come down again; but the others did not notice it, & she said nothing. ~~He departed~~ He departed a few minutes

later in the dusk of the August evening, leaving Anne still in doubt as to the meaning of his private meeting with Miss Johnson.

John Loveday had been going to tell them that on the last night, by an especial privilege, he would be in his power to come & stay with them until eleven o'clock, but at the moment of leaving he abandoned the intention: Anne's attitude had chilled him, & made him anxious to be off. He utilized the spare hours of that last night in another way.

This was by coming down from the outskirts of the camp in the evening, & seating himself on the slope opposite the mill-pond as soon as it was quite dark, where he watched the lights in the different windows till one appeared in Anne's bedroom, & she herself came forward to shut the casement, with the candle in her hand. The light shone out upon the broad & deep mill-head, illuminating to a distinct individuality every moth & gnat that entered the quivering chain of radiance stretching across the water towards him, & every bubble or atom of froth that floated into its width. She stood for some time looking out, little thinking what the darkness concealed on the other side of that wide stream; till at length she closed the casement, drew the curtains, & retreated into the room. Presently the light went out, upon which John Loveday returned to camp, & lay down in his tent.

The next morning was dull & windy, & the trumpets of the 8th sounded Reveillée for the last time on Overcombe Down. Knowing that the dragoons were going away Anne had slept heedfully, & was at once awakened by the smart notes. She looked out of the window to find that his white form being visible where he stood motionless, the miller was already astir, at the end of his garden, watching the preparations. Anne also looked on as well as she could through the dim grey gloom, & soon she saw the blue smoke from the cooks fires, creeping fitfully along the ground instead of rising in vertical columns as it had done during the fine weather season. Then the men began to carry their bedding to the waggons, & others to throw all refuse into

the trenches, till the down was thick as an anthill. Anne did not want to see John Loveday again, but hearing the household astir she began to dress at leisure, looking out at the camp the while.

When the soldiers had breakfasted she saw them selling & giving away their superfluous crockery to the natives who had clustered round. & then they pulled down & cleared away the temporary kitchens which they had constructed when they came. A tapping of tent pegs & wriggling of picket-posts followed, & soon the cones of white canvas, now almost become a component part of the landscape, fell to the ground. At this moment the miller came indoors, & asked at the foot of the stairs if anybody was going up the hill with him.

Anne felt that, in spite of the cloud hanging over John in her mind it would ill become the present moment not to see him off, & she went downstairs to her mother, who was already there, though Bob was nowhere to be seen. Each took an arm of the miller, & thus climbed to the top of the hill. By this time the mustering horses were at the place of assembly, & shortly after the mill party reached level ground the cavalcade began to move forward. When the trumpet-major drew near to the spot where the Lovedays were waiting to see him pass, half buried in his horse-furniture his father turned anxiously to Anne & said "You will shake hands with John?"

Anne faintly replied yes, & allowed the miller to take her forward on his arm to the trackway, so as to be close to the flank of the approaching column. It came up, many people on each side grasping the hands of the troopers in bidding them farewell; & as soon as John Loveday saw the members of his father's household he stretched down his hand across his right pistol for the same performance. The miller gave this; then Mrs Loveday gave hers; & then the hand of the trumpet-major was extended towards Anne. But as the horse did not absolutely stop it was a somewhat awkward performance for a young woman to undertake, & more on that account than on any other Anne drew back, & the gallant trooper passed by without receiving her adieu.

Anne's heart reproached her for a moment; & then she thought that after all he was not going off to immediate battle, & that she would in all probability see him again at no distant date, when she hoped that the mystery of his conduct would be explained. Her thoughts were interrupted by a voice at her elbow: "Thank God, he's gone. Now here's a chance for me".

She turned; & Festus Derriman was standing by her.

"There's no chance for you," she said indignantly.

"Why not?"

"Because there's another left!"

The words had slipped out quite unintentionally, & she blushed quickly: she would have given anything to be able to recall them. But he had heard, & said, "Who?"

Anne went forward to the miller to avoid replying, & Festus caught her no more.

"Has anybody been hanging about Overcombe Mill except Loveday's son, the soldier?" he asked of a comrade.

"His son the sailor," was the reply.

"Oh – his son the sailor," said Festus slowly. ~~misunderstanding the wrong fellow have~~ "Hang his son the sailor!"

End of Part VI

The two households ~~became one~~ united.

At this particular moment the object of Festus Derriman's fulmination was assuredly not dangerous as a rival. Bob, after obstinately watching the soldiers from the front of the house till they were out of sight, had gone within doors, & seated himself in the mill-parlour, where his father found him, his elbows resting on the table, & his forehead on his hands, his eyes being fixed upon a document that lay open before him.

What art perusing Bob, with such a long face?

Bob sighed, & then Mrs Loveday & Anne entered. 'Tis only a state-paper that I fondly thought I should have a use for', he said gloomily. And looking down as before he presently cleared his voice, as if moved inwardly to go on, & began to read in feeling tones from what proved to be his nullified marriage license:

"'Timothy Titus Philemon, by permission Bishop of Bristol: To our well-beloved Robert Loveday, of the parish of Overcombe, Bachelor; and Matilda Johnson of the same parish, Spinster. Greeting.'"

Here Anne sighed, but contained to keep down her sigh to a mere nothing.

Beautiful language, is n't it, said Bob. I was never greeted like that afore!

Yes, I have often thought it very excellent language myself, said Mrs Loveday.

Come to that, the old gentleman will greet thee like it again any day for a couple of guineas, said the miller.

That's not the point, father! You never could see the real meaning of these things.... Well, then he goes on: 'Whereas ye are as it is alleged determined to enter into the estate of Matrimony —' But why should I read on? It all means nothing now — nothing — & the splendid words are all wasted upon air. It seems as if I had been hailed by some venerable hoary prophet, & had turned away, put the helm hard up, & would n't hear.

Nobody replied, feeling probably that sympathy could not meet the case, & Bob went on reading the rest of it to himself, occasionally heaving a breath like the wind in a ship's shrouds.

I would n't set my mind so much upon her, if I was thee, said his father at last.

Why not?

Well; folk might call thee a fool, & say thy brains were turning to water.

Bob was apparently much struck by this thought, & instead of continuing the discourse further he carefully folded up the license, rose, went out, & walked up & down the garden. It was startlingly apt what his father had said; & worse than that, what people

would call him might be true, & the liquefaction ~~what people would say might be true~~ of his brains. By degrees he became much concerned ~~at his state~~, & the more he examined himself by this new light the more clearly did he perceive that he was in a very bad way. On reflection he remembered that since Miss Johnson's departure his appetite had decreased amazingly. He had eaten in meat no more than fourteen or fifteen ounces a day, but one third of a quartern pudding on an average: in vegetables only a small heap of potatoes & half a York cabbage, & no gravy whatever; which considering the usual appetite of a seaman for fresh food at the end of a long voyage was no small index of the depression of his mind. Then he had awaked once at least every night, & on one occasion twice. While dressing each morning since the gloomy day he had not whistled more than seven bars of a hornpipe without stopping & falling into thought of a most painful kind; & he had told none but absolutely true stories of foreign parts to the neighbouring villagers when they saluted & clustered about him as usual for anything he chose to pour forth — except that story of the whale whose eye was about as large as the round pond in Derriman's ~~[illegible]~~ ewe-lease — which was like tempting fate to set a seal for ever upon his tongue as a traveller. All this enervation, mental & physical, had been produced by Matilda's departure.

He also considered what he had lost of the rational amusements of manhood during these unfortunate days. He might have gone to Weymouth every afternoon, stood before Gloucester Lodge till the King & Queen came out, held his hat in his hand, & enjoyed their majesties' smiles at his homage, all for nothing; watched the picket-mounting, heard the different bands strike up, observed the staff; & above all, have seen the pretty Weymouth girls go trip-trip-trip along the Esplanade ~~[illegible]~~ deliberately fixing their innocent eyes on the distant sea, the grey cliffs & the sky, & accidentally on the soldiers & himself.

"I'll raze out her image", he said. "She shall make a fool of me no more," And his resolve resulted in conduct which had elements of real greatness.

He went back to his father, whom he found in the mill loft. "'Tis time, father, what you say," he frowned. "My brains will turn to bilge-water if I think of her much longer. By the oath of a – navigator, I wish I could sigh less & laugh more. Gad, she's gone. Why can't I let her go, & be happy? But how begin?

"Take it careless, my son," said the miller. And lay yerself out to enjoy snacks & cordials."

"Ah – that's a thought!" said Bob.

"Baccy is good for 't. So is sperrits. But I don't advise thee ever to drink neat."

"Baccy – I'd forgot it!" said Captain Loveday.

He went to his room, hastily untied the package of tobacco that he had brought home; & began to make use of it in his own way, calling to David for a bottle of the old household mead that had lain in the cellar these eleven years. He was discovered by his father three-quarters of an hour later as a half invisible object behind a cloud of smoke. [The miller drew a breath of relief—

¶ "Why Bob," he said, "I thought the house was a-fire!"

"I'm smoking rather fast, to drown my reflections, father. 'Tis no use to chaw."

To tempt his attenuated appetite the unhappy mate made David cook an omelet, & bake a seed cake, the latter so richly compounded that it opened to the knife like a freckled buttercup. With the same object he stuck night-lines into the banks of the mill-pond, & drew up next morning a family of fat eels, some of which were skinned & prepared for his breakfast. They were his favourite fish, but such had been his condition that until the moment of making this effort he had quite forgotten their existence at his father's back door.

In a few days Bob Loveday had considerably improved in tone & vigour. One other obvious remedy for his dejection was indulge in the society of Miss Garland, love being so much more effectually got rid of

by displacement than by attempted annihilation. But Loveday was of so simple a nature that the belief that he had offended her beyond forgiveness & his ever present sense of her as a woman whose natural speech was ~~who by creation & antecedents was effectually kept from~~ fitted to adorn a higher sphere than his own, effectually kept him from going near her for a long time, notwithstanding that they were inmates of one house. The reserve was, however, in some degree broken by the appearance one morning, some time later in the season, of the point of a saw through the partition which divided Anne's room from the Loveday half of the house. Though she dined & supped with her mother & the Loveday family, Miss Garland had still continued to occupy her old apartments, because she found it more convenient there to pursue her hobbies, & the division had not as yet been broken down. ~~of woodwork, stopping her father's old pictures~~

As the saw worked its way downwards under her astonished gaze Anne jumped up from her drawing; & presently the temporary canvasing & papering which had sealed up the old door of communication was cut completely through. The door burst open, & Bob stood revealed on the other side, with the saw in his hand.

"I beg your ladyship's pardon" he said, taking off the hat he had been working in, as his handsome face expanded into a smile. "I didn't know this door opened into your private room."

"Indeed, Captain Loveday."

"I am pulling down the division on principle, as we be now one family. But I really thought the door opened into your passage".

"It doesn't matter; I can get another room."

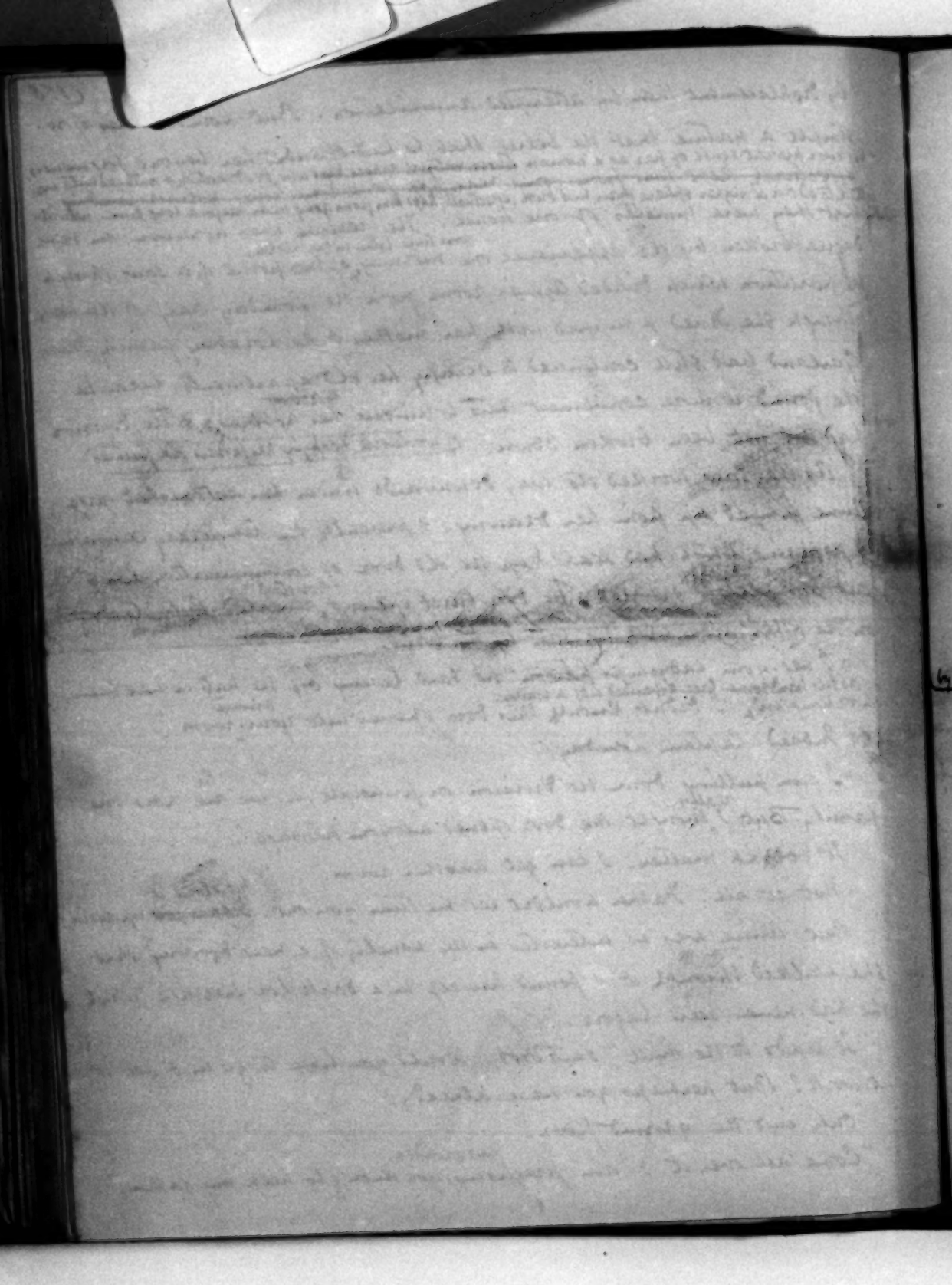
"Not at all. Father wouldn't let me turn you out. I'll close it up again.

But Anne was so interested in the novelty of a new doorway that she walked through it, & found herself in a dark low passage which she had never seen before.

"It leads to the mill," said Bob. Would you like to go in & see it at work? But perhaps you have already."

"Only into the ground floor."

"Come all over it. I am practising as grinder, you know, to help my father."



She followed him along the dark passage, in the side of which he opened a little trap, when she saw a great slimy cavern, where the long arms of the mill-wheel flung themselves slowly & dismally round, & splashing water drops caught the little light that strayed into the gloomy place, turning it into stars & flashes. A cold mist-laden puff of air came into their faces, & the roar from within made it necessary for Anne to shout as she said "It is dismal! Let us go on."

Bob shut the trap, the roar ceased, & they went on to the inner part of the mill, where the air was warm & nutty, & pervaded by a fog of flour. Then they ascended the stairs, & saw the stones lumbering round & round, & the yellow corn running down through the hopper. They climbed yet further to the top stage, where the wheat lay in bins, & where long rays like yellow feelers streched in from the sun through the little window, got nearly lost among cobwebs & beams, & completed its course by marking the opposite wall with a glowing patch of gold.

In his earnestness as an exhibitor Bob opened the bolter which was spinning rapidly round, the result being that a dense cloud of flour rolled out in their faces, & reminded Anne that her complexion was probably much paler by this time than when she had entered the mill. She thanked her companion for his trouble, & said she would now go down. He followed her with the same deference, as hitherto & with a sudden & uneasy sense that of all ones for his former unhappy passion this would have been the nicest, the easiest, & the most effectual, if he had only been fortunate enough to keep her upon easy terms. But Miss Garland showed no disposition to go further than accept his services as a guide; she descended to the open air, shook the flour from her like a bird, & went on into the garden amid the September sunshine, whose rays lay like a yellow warp across the blue haze which the earth gave forth. The gnats were dancing up & down in airy companies, all of one mind, & the nasturtium flowers shone out in groups from the dark hedge over which they climbed, & the mellow smell of the decline of summer was oozing out of everything. Bob followed her as far as the gate, looked after her, thought of her as the same girl who had help

encouraged him years ago, when she seemed so superior to him, though now they were almost equal she apparently thought him beneath her. It was with a new sense of pleasure that his mind flew to the fact that she was now an inmate of his father's house.

His obsequious bearing was continued during the next week. In the busy hours of the day they seldom met, but they regularly encountered each other at meals, & there occasions began to have an interest for him quite irrespective of the dishes & cups. When Anne entered & took her seat she was always loudly hailed by Miller Loveday as he whetted his knife; but from Bob she received no such familiar greeting; & they often sat down together as if each had a blind eye in the direction of the other. Bob sometimes told curious & correct stories about sea-captains, pilots, boatswains, mates, able seamen, & other curious creatures inhabiting the marine world, but these were directly addressed to his father & Mrs Loveday, Anne being included at the clinching-point by a mere glance only. He sometimes opened bottles of sweet cider for her, & then she thanked him; but even this did not lead to her encouraging his chat.

One day when Anne was paring an apple she was left at table with the young man. "I have made something for you", he said.

She looked all over the table; nothing was there save the ordinary remnants. "O I don't mean that it is here. It is out by the bridge at the mill-head."

He arose, & Anne followed with curiosity in her eyes, & with her firm little mouth pouted up to a puzzled shape. On reaching the mossy mill-head she found that he had fixed in the keen damp draught which always prevailed over the wheel an Aolian harp of large size. At present the strings were partly covered with a cloth. He lifted it & the wires began to emit a weird harmony which mingled curiously with the plashing of the wheel. "I made it on purpose for you Miss Garland" he said.

She thanked him very warmly, for her instrument interested her, she

she had never seen anything like such an instrument before, & it interested her. "It was very thoughtful of you to make it" she added. "How came you to think of such a thing?"

Oh, I don't know exactly; he replied as if he did not care to be questioned on the point. "I have never made one before in my life till now.

Earlier

After this, every night during the moonful gales of autumn, the strange mixed music of water, wind, & strings met her ear, swelling & sinking with an almost supernatural cadence. The character of the instrument was far enough removed from anything she had hitherto seen of Bob's hobbies, so that she marvelled pleasantly at the new depths of poetry this contrivance revealed as existing in that young seaman's nature, & allowed her emotions to flow out yet a little further in the old direction, notwithstanding her late severe resolve to bar them back.

One breezy night, when the mill was kept going into the small hours, & the wind was exactly in the direction of the water-current, the music so mingled with her dreams as to wake her: it seemed to set itself rhythmically to the words "Remember me; think of me!" She was much impressed; the sounds were almost too touching; & she spoke to Bob the next morning on the subject.

How strange it is that you should have thought of fixing that harp where the water (she gently observed) rushes. It affects me almost painfully at night. You are poetical, Captain Bob. But it is too — too sad."

"I will take it away", said Captain Bob promptly. "It certainly is too sad: I thought so myself. I myself was kept awake by it one night."

"How came you to think of making such a peculiar thing?"

"Well", said Bob, "it is hardly worth saying why: It is not a good place for such a queer, noisy machine; and I'll take it away."

"On second thoughts", said Anne "I should like it to remain a little longer, because it sets me thinking."

"Of me?" he asked, with earnest frankness.

Anne's colour rose fast. "Well yes", she said trying to infuse much

plain voice. matter. I don't see it." Of course I am led to think of the person who invented it."

Bob seemed unaccountably embarrassed, & the subject was not pursued. About half an hour later he came to her again with something of an uneasy look in his eye. "There was a little matter I didn't tell you just now," Miss Garland, he said. "About that harp thing, I mean. I did make it certainly, but it was my brother John who asked me to do it, just before he went away. John is very musical, as you know, & he said it would interest you; but as he didn't ask me to tell I did not. Perhaps I ought to have, & not have taken the credit to myself."

"Oh it is nothing," said Anne quickly. "It is a very incomplete instrument after all, & it will be just as well for you to take it away as you first proposed."

He said that he would, but he forgot to do it that day; & the following night there was a high wind, & the harp cried & moaned so movingly that Anne, whose window was quite near, could hardly bear the sound with its new associations. John Loveday was present to her mind all night as an ill-used man; & yet she could not own that she had ill-used him.

The harp was removed next day. Bob, feeling that his credit for originality was damaged in the eye, by way of recovering it, set himself to paint the summer-house which Anne required, & when she came out he assured her that it was quite his own idea.

"It wanted doing, certainly," she said in a neutral tone.

"It is just about rather troublesome."

Yes. You can't quite reach up. That is because you are not very tall — is it not, Captain Loveday?

"You never used to say things like that."

"Oh. I didn't mean that you are much less than tall. Shall I hold the paint for you, to save your stepping down?"

"Thank you, if you would."

She took the paint-pot, & stood looking at the brush as it moved up &

down in his hand. "I hope I shall not sprinkle your fingers" he observed as he dipped.

"Oh, that would not matter...you do it very well."

"I am glad to hear that you think so."

"But perhaps not quite so much art is demanded to paint a summer-house as to paint a portrait?"

Thinking that, as a painter's daughter, & a person of education superior to his own, she spoke with a flavour of sarcasm, he felt humbled & said "You did not use to talk like that to me."

"I was perhaps too young then to take any pleasure in giving pain," she observed daringly.

"Does it give you pleasure?

Anne nodded. "I like to give pain to people who have given pain to me," she said smartly, without removing her eyes from the green liquid in her hand.

I ask your pardon for that.

I didn't say I meant you. — Though I did mean you.

Bob looked & looked at her side face till he was bewitched into putting down the brush. "It was that stupid forgetting of you for a time!" he explained. "Well, I hadn't seen you for so very long — consider how many years! O dear Anne, he said, advancing to take her hand, how well we knew one another when we were children! You was a queen to me then; & so you are now, & always.

Possibly Anne was thrilled pleasantly enough at having brought the truant village-lad to her feet again; but he was not to find the situation so easy as he imagined, & her hand was not to be taken yet.

"Very pretty!" she said laughing. And only six weeks since Miss Johnson left."

"Lord, don't say anything about that!" implored Bob. "I mean that I never — never deliberately loved her — for a long time together, that is: it was a sudden sort of thing you know. But towards you — I have more or less honoured & respectfully loved you, off & on, all my life. There, that's true."

Anne retorted quickly. "I am willing, off & on, to believe you, Captain

Robert. But I don't see any good in your making these solemn declarations."

"Give me leave to explain, dear Miss Garland. It is to get you to be pleased to renew renew an old promise – made years ago; that you'll think o' me – not a word of any promise will I repeat

Well, well; I won't urge ye to-day. Only let me beg of you to get over the quite wrong notion you have o' me; & it shall be my whole endeavour to fetch your gracious favour."

Anne turned away from him & entered the house, whither in the course of a quarter of an hour he followed her, knocking at her door, & asking to be let in. She said she was busy; whereupon he went away, to come back again in a short time & receive the same answer.

"I have finished painting the summer-house for you," he said through the door. "I cannot come to see it. I shall be engaged till supper-time"

She heard him breathe a heavy sigh & withdraw, privately murmuring something about his bad luck in being cut away from the storm like this. But it was not over yet. When supper-time came & they sat down together she took upon herself to reprove him for what he had said to her in the garden.

Bob made his forehead express despair. "Now I beg you this one thing" he said. "Just let me know your whole mind. Then I shall have a chance to confess my faults & mend them, or clear my conduct to your satisfaction."

She answered with quickness, but not loud enough to be heard by the old people at the other end of the table: "Then Captain Loveday, I will tell you one thing, one fault, that perhaps would have been more proper to my character than to yours. You are too easily impressed by new faces, & that gives me a bad opinion of you: yes, bad opinion.

"O that's it" said Bob slowly, looking at her with the intense respect of a pupil for a master, her words being spoken in a manner so precisely between jest & earnest that he was in some doubt how they were to be received.

impressed by new faces. It is wrong, certainly, of me."

The popping of a cider-cork, & the pouring out of strong beer with a view to giving it a head, were apparently distractions sufficient to excuse her in not rejoining attending further to him; & during the remainder of the sitting her gentle chiding seemed to be sinking seriously into his mind. Perhaps her own heart ached to see how silent he was; but she had always meant to punish him. Day after day for two or three weeks she preserved the same demeanour, with a self-control which did justice to her character. Somewhat, on his part, considering what he had to put up with, how she elected to snapped him off, refused to come out when he called her, refused to see him when he wanted to enter the little parlour which she had now appropriated to her private use, his patience testified strongly to his good humour.

Chapter XXVII.

Military preparations on an extended scale.

Christmas had passed: Dreary winter with dark evenings had given place to more dreary winter with light evenings: Rapid thaws had ended in rain, rain in wind, wind in dust. Showery days had come — the season of pink dawns & white sunsets; & people hoped that the March weather was over.

The chief incident that concerned the household at the mill was that the miller, following the example of all his neighbours, had become a volunteer, & daily appeared three a week in a red, long-tailed military coat, pipe-clayed breeches, black cloth gaiters, a heel-balled helmet-hat with a tuft of green wool, & epaulettes of the same colour & material. Bob still remained neutral. Not being able to decide whether to enroll himself as a sea-fencible, a local militia-man, or a volunteer, he simply went on dancing attendance upon Anna. Mrs. Loveday had become aware to the fact that the pair of young people stood in a curious attitude towards each other; but as they were never seen chatting together with their heads & scarcely ever sat even in the same room, she could not be sure what their movements meant.

who perhaps naturally enough.

Strangely enough, since entering the Loveday family herself she had gradually thought it grown to think less favourably by Anne of doing the same thing than she had done when reverted to her original idea of encouraging Festus Derriman; & this more neither of them was a member of particularly because he had of late shown such admirable perseverance in haunting the precincts of the mill, presumably with the intention of lighting upon the young girl. But the weather had kept her mostly indoors.

One afternoon it was raining in torrents. Such leaves as there were on trees at this time of year — those of the laurel & other evergreens — staggered beneath the hard blows of the drops which fell upon them, & afterwards could be seen trickling down the stems beneath, or silently entering the ground. The surface of the mill-pond leapt up in a thousand spirts under the same downfall, & clucked like a hen as it undulated under the wind. in the holes along the banks. The only dry spot visible from the front windows of the mill-house was the inside of a small shed, on the opposite side of the courtyard. While Mrs Loveday was noticing the threads (sad) of rain descending across its interior shade Festus Derriman walked up & entered it for shelter, which, owing to the lumber within, it but scantly afforded.

It was an excellent opportunity for helping on her scheme. Anne was in the back room, & by asking him in till the rain was over she would bring him face to face with her daughter, whom she as the days went on she increasingly wished to marry to some other man than Loveday; now that the romance of her own (She was pretty well provided for, that's true; she was not unhappy; but the plain fact was that she had married beneath her) alliance with the miller had in some respect worn off. She beckoned to Festus through the window-pane; he instantly complied with her signal — having in fact placed himself there on purpose to be noticed; for he knew that Miss Garland would not be out of doors on such a day.

"Good afternoon, Mrs. Loveday," said Festus on entering. "There now — if I did not think that's how it would be!" His voice had suddenly warmed to anger — for he had seen a little figure having previously slipped through. [Mrs Loveday turned, observed that Anne was gone, & said "What is it?" as if she did not know

"Oh nothing, nothing!" said Festus crossly. "You know well enough what

it is, ma'am; only you make pretense otherwise. But I'll bring her to book yet. You shall drop your haughty airs, my charmer! She little thinks I have kept an account of 'em all.

"But you must treat her politely, sir," said Mr Loveday, secretly pleased at these signs of unconstrollable affection

Don't tell me of politeness or generosity, ma'am! She is more than a match for me. She regularly gets over me. I have passed by this house five-& fifty times since last Martinmas, & this is all I get at last.

But you will stay till the rain is over, sir?

No. I don't mind rain. I'm off again. She's got somebody else in her eye!" And the yeoman went out, slamming the door.

Meanwhile the slippery object of his hopes had gone along the dark passage, passed the trap which opened on the wheel, & through the door into the mill, where she was met by Bob in the hoary character of a miller, who had looked up from the flour-shoot enquiringly, & said "you want me, Miss Garland?"

"O no," said she. "I only want to be allowed to stand here a few minutes."

He looked at her to know if she meant it, & finding that she did, returned to his post. When the mill had rumbled ~~clacked~~ on a little longer he came back.

"Bob," she said when she saw his more; "remember that you are at work, & have no time to stand close to me."

He bowed, & went to his original post again, Anne watching from the window till Charles should leave. The mill rumbled on as before, & at last Bob came to her for the third time. "Now Bob —" she began.

"On my honour 'tis only to ask a question. Will you walk with me to church next Sunday afternoon?"

"Perhaps I will," she said. But at this moment the yeoman left the house, & Anne to escape further parley returned to the dwelling by the way she had come.

Sunday afternoon arrived, & the family was standing at the door, ready

for the church bells to begin. From that side of the house they could see southward across a paddock to the rising ground further ahead, where there grew a large elm tree, beneath whose boughs footpaths crossed in different directions like meridians at the pole. The tree was old, and in summer the grass beneath it was quite worn away by the feet of the many loiterers & idlers who haunted the spot. The tree formed a conspicuous object in the surrounding landscape.

While they looked a man, a foot soldier in red uniform & white leggings came along one of the paths, & stopping beneath the elm drew from his pocket a paper, which he proceeded to nail up by the four corners to the trunk. He drew back, looked at it, & went on his way. Bob got his glass from indoors & levelled it at the placard; but after looking for a long time he could make out nothing but a lion & a unicorn at the top. Anne who was ready for church, moved away from the door, though it was yet early, & showed her intention of going by way of the elm. The paper had been so impressively nailed up that she was anxious to read it even at this theological time. Bob took the opportunity of following, & reminded her of her promise.

"Then walk behind me – not at all close", she said.

"Yes" he replied, immediately dropping behind. The ludicrous humility of his manner led her to add playfully, over her shoulder: "It serves you right, you know."

"I deserve anything. But I must take the liberty to say that I hope my behaviour about Matil – in forgetting you awhile, will not make ye wish to keep me always behind?

She replied confidentially: "I am so earnest not to be seen with you that I may appear to people to be independent of you. Knowing what I know of your weakness I can do no otherwise. You must be schooled into –"

"O Anne," sighed Bob. "You hit me hard (to be sure). If ever I do win you I am sure I shall have fairly earned you.

"You are not what you once seemed to be", she returned softly. "I don't quite like to let myself love you." The last words were not very audible, &

X. As Associated Volunteers you will be called out only once a week, unless the actual Landing of the Enemy should render your further services necessary.

As Pioneers or Labourers you will be employed in Breaking up Roads to ~~Oppose~~ hinder the Enemy's advance.

as Bob was behind he caught nothing of them; nor did he see how sentimental she had become all of a sudden. They walked the rest of the way in silence, & coming to the tree reades follows:—

Address to all ranks & descriptions of Englishmen. [Friends & Country men:—[The French are now assembling the largest force that ever was prepared, to invade this Kingdom, with the professed purpose of effecting our complete Ruin & Destruction. They do not disguise their intentions, as they often have done to other Countries; but openly boast that they will come over in such Numbers as cannot be resisted.

On this occasion no man's service is compelled, but you are invited voluntarily to come forward in defence of everything that is dear to you, by entering your names on the Lists which are sent to every Parish, the Tything-man of & engaging to act either as associated Volunteers bearing arms, as Pioneers and Labourers, or as Driners of waggons. ✕ men

Wherever the French have lately appeared they have spared neither Rich nor Poor, Old nor Young; but like a Destructive Pestilence have laid waste and destroyed every Thing that before was fair & flourishing.

Those who have ~~Lookages~~ Pick-Axes, Spades, Shovels, Bill-Hooks, or other Working Implements, are desired to mention them to the Constable or Tything-Man of their Parish, in order that they may be entered on the Lists opposite their Names, to be used if necessary.....

It is thought desirable to give you this Explanation, that you may not be ignorant of the Duties to which you may be called.— But if the Love of true Liberty & honest Fame has not ceased to animate the Hearts of Englishmen, Pay, though necessary, will be the least Part of your Reward. You will find your best Recompence in having done your Duty to your King & Country by driving back or destroying your old & implacable Enemy, enemies of your Freedom & Happiness, &

therefore seeking to destroy them; in having protected your Wives & Children from Death or worse than Death, which will follow the Success of such inveterate foes.

Rouse, therefore, & unite as one man in the best of Causes! United we may defy the World to conquer us; but Victory will never belong to those who are slothful and unprepared.

"I must go & join at once!" said Bob, slapping his hand upon his thigh.

Anne turned to him, all the playfulness gone from her face. She looked him over, but did not speak.

"Nothing will happen! he added, divining her thought. They are not come yet. It will be time enough to be frightened when Boney's here. But I must enroll myself at once — it must be in the sea faculties I suppose. I wish we lived in the North of England, so as to be further away from where he'll land, she murmured unluckily. Bob

"Where we are would be Paradise to me, if you would only make it so."

"It is not right to talk so lightly at such a serious time," she thoughtfully returned, as they went on towards the church.

~~[illegible]~~ On drawing near they saw through the boughs of a clump of intervening trees, still leafless, but bursting into buds of amber hue, a glittering which seemed to be reflected from points of steel. * In a few moments they heard above the tender chiming of the church bells the loud voice of a man giving words of command, at which all the metallic points suddenly shifted, like the bristles of a porcupine, & glistened anew.

"'Tis the drilling", said Lovelady. "They drill now between the services you know, because they can't get the men together so readily in the week. It makes me feel that I ought to be doing more than I am."

When they had passed round the belt of trees the company of recruits became visible, consisting of able-bodied inhabitants of the hamlets nearabout, more or less known to Bob & Anne. They were assembled on the green plot outside

* Historically true. [foot-note]

the churchyard-gate, dressed in their common clothes, & the sergeant who was putting them through their drill was the man who had nailed up the proclamation.

"Men, I dismissed ye too soon — parade, parade again I say," he cried. "My watch is fast I find. There's another twenty minutes afore the worship of God commences. Now all of you that ha'n't got fawlocks fall in at the lower end. Eyes right & dress!"

As every man was anxious to see how the rest stood, those at the end of the line pressed forward for that purpose, till the line assumed the form of a horseshoe.

"Look at ye now! Why, you are all a crooking in. Dress, dress!"

They dressed for their ith; but impelled by the same motive they soon resumed their former figure, & so they were despairingly permitted to remain.

"Now I hope you'll have a little patience," said the sergeant, as he stood in the centre of the arc, "& pay particular attention to the word of command, just exactly as I give it out to ye; & if I should go wrong, I shall be much obliged to any friend who'll put me right again, for I've only been in the army three weeks myself, & we are all liable to mistakes."

"So we be, so we be," said the line, heartily.

"'Tention the whole. Men. Poise fawlocks! Very well done!

"Please what must we do that ha'n't got no firelocks," said the lower end of the line in a helpless voice.

Now was ever such a question! Why you must do nothing at all, but think how you'd poise 'em if you had 'em. You middle men that are armed with hurdle-sticks & cabbage-stumps just to make believe, must of course use 'em as if they were the real thing. — Now then: Cock fawlocks! Present! Fire! (Pretend to pull the triggers at the same time throw your imaginations into the battlefield & the bullets of your enemy) Very good — very good indeed — except that some of you were a little too soon, & the rest a little too late.

"Please Sergeant, can I fall out, as I am (master chimney-player) to the choir, & my bass-viol strings won't stand at this time o'year, unless they be screwed up a little before the passon comes in?

How can you think of such trifles as church going at such a time as this, when your country is on the point of invasion? said the Sergeant sternly. And, as you know, the drill ends three minutes afore church begins, & that's the law; & it wants a quarter of an hour yet. — Now at the word Prime, shake the powder (supposing you've got it) into the priming-pan, three last fingers behind the rammer; then shut your pans, drawing your right arm nimbly towards your body. I ought to have told ye before this that at Hand your katridge, seize it & bring it with a quick motion to your mouth, bite the top well off, & don't swallow so much of the powder as to make ye hawk & spit instead of attending to your drill. — What's that man a saying of in the rear rank?"

Please Sir, 'tis Anthony Cripplestraw, wanting to know how he's to bite off his katridge, when he haven't a tooth left in's head?

Man alive! Why what's your genius for war? Hold it up to your right-hand man's mouth, to be sure, & let him nip it off for ye. — Well, what have you to say, Private Tremlett? Don't ye understand English?

Ask yer pardon, Sergeant; but what must we infantry do if the awkward squad do if Boney comes afore we get our firelocks?"

Take a pike — like the rest of the incapables. You'll find a store of 'em ready in the corner of the church-tower. Now then — Shoulder-r-r-r ——

"There — they be tinging in the passon!" exclaimed David, Miller Loveday's man, who also formed one of the company, as the bells changed from chiming all three together to a quick beating of one. The whole line drew a breath of relief, & threw down their arms, & began running off.

Well, then I must dismiss ye, said the sergeant. Next drill is Tuesday afternoon at four. And mind, if your masters won't let ye leave work soon enough, tell me, & I'll write a line to Gover'ment! — Now just form up a minute — here's every man's money for

his attendance." The sergeant drew out a large canvas bag, plunged his hand into a family of shillings, & handed them round, as the men stood in something like line again. "Attention! To the right – left-wheel I mean – no, no – right wheel. Mar-r-r-rch!"

Some wheeled to the right, & some to the left, & some obliging men, including Cripplestraw, tried to wheel both ways.

Stop, stop – try again. Gentlemen unfortunately when I'm in a hurry I can never remember my right hand from my left, & never could as a boy. You must excuse me please. Practice makes perfect, as the saying is, & much as I've learnt since I 'listed, we always find something new. Now then, right wheel – march – halt! Stand at ease – dismiss!" I think that's the order o't, but I'll look in the General book afore Tuesday. ✻

Many of the company who had been drilled prepared to go off & spend their shillings instead of entering the church; but Anne & Captain Bob passed in. Even the interior of the sacred edifice was affected by the agitation of the times. The religion of the country had, in fact, changed from love of God to hatred of Napoleon Buonaparte; & as if to remind the devout of this alteration, the pikes for the pikemen (all those accepted men who were not otherwise armed) were kept in the church of each parish. There, against the wall they always stood, a whole sheaf of them, leaning against the wall, formed of new ash stems, with a spike driven in at one end, & the stick being preserved from splitting by a ferule. And there they remained, year after year, in the corner of the aisle, till they were removed & placed under the gallery stairs, & thence ultimately to the belfry, where they grew black, musty & worm-eaten, & were gradually stolen & carried off by sextons, parish clerks, whitewashers, window-menders, & other church-servants, for use at home as rake-stems, benefit-club staves & pick-handles, in which degraded situations they may still occasionally be found.

But in their new & shining state they had a terror for Anne, whose eyes were involuntarily drawn towards them as she sat at Bob's side during the service, filling her with bloody visions of their possible use not far from

✻ partly from a contemporary account.

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✻ partly from a contemporary account.

the very spot on which they were now assembled. The sermon, too, was on the subject of patriotism; so that when they came out she began to harp uneasily upon the probability of their all being driven from their homes.

Bob assured her that with the sixty thousand regulars, the reserve, & the volunteers there was not much to fear. "But I sometimes have a fear that poor John will be killed," she continued after a pause. "He is sure to be among the first that will have to face the invaders; & the trumpeters get picked off."

"There is the same chance for him as for the others" said Anne.

"Yes... the same chance, such as it is..... You have never liked John since that affair of Matilda Johnson, have you?..." "Why?" she quickly asked. "Well," said Bob timidly, "as it is a likelish time for him, would it not be worth while to make up any differences before the crash comes!"

"I have nothing to make up", said Anne with some distress, her feelings towards the trumpet-major being of a complicated kind. She still fully believed him to have smuggled away Miss Johnson because of his own interest in that lady, which must have made his professions to herself a mere pastime; but that very conduct had in it the curious advantage to herself of setting Bob free.

"Since John has been gone" continued her companion, I have found out more of his meaning, & of what he really had to do with that woman's flight. Did you know he had anything to do with it?

Yes.

"That he got her to go away?"

She looked at Bob with surprise. He was not acquainted with John, & yet he knew so much as this. "Yes." he said. "What did it mean?"

He did not explain to her then; but the possibility of John's death, which had been newly brought home to him by the military events of the day, determined him to get poor John's character cleared. Reproaching himself for letting her remain so long with a mistaken idea of him, Bob went this father as soon as they got home, & begged him to get Mrs Loveday to tell Anne the true reason of John's objection to Miss Johnson as a sister-in-law. it being information a species of information which he could not convey to her himself.

"She thinks it is because they were old lovers never met; & that he would like to renew the friendship between Miss Ridney & Jack!
re-acclaimed by his father-in-coalition. wants to marry her."

"Then that's the meaning of the split," said the miller.

"What were they any more than common friends?" asked Bob uneasily.

"Not on her side," perhaps."

"Well, we must do it," replied Bob painfully conscious that common justice to John might bring them into hazardous rivalry; yet determined to explain.

"Tell it all to Mrs. Lindsay, and get her to tell Anne."

Chapter XXIV

A letter, a visitor, & a tin box.

The result of the explanation upon Anne was bitter self reproach. She was so sorry at having wronged the kindly soldier that she went by herself to the dawn, next morning & stood exactly where his tent had been, on the spot whereon he had lain so many nights. thinking what sadness he must have suffered at the time of packing up & going away. because of her After that she descended to the house & wrote an impulsive letter to him, in which occurred the following passages, indiscreet enough under the circumstances:

"I find all justice, all right rectitude, on your side; & all impertinence, all inconsiderateness, on mine. I am so much convinced of your honour in the whole transaction that I shall for the future mistrust myself in everything. And if it be possible, whenever I differ from you on any point, I shall take an hour's time for consideration before I say that I differ. If I have lost your friendship I have only myself to thank for it; but I sincerely hope that you can forgive."

After writing this she went to the garden, where Bob was shearing the spring grass from the paths. "What is John's direction?" she said, holding the sealed letter in her hand.

"Exeter Barracks." Bob faltered, his countenance falling sinking

She thanked him & went indoors. When he came in, later in the day, he passed the door of her empty sitting-room, & saw the letter on the mantelpiece. He disliked the sight of it. Hearing voices in the other room he entered & found Anne & her mother there, talking to Cripplestraw, who had just come with a

message from Farmer Derriman, to requesting Miss Garland, as she valued the peace of mind of an old & troubled man, to go at once & see him.

"I cannot go," she said, not liking the contemptuous ask that such a visit involved.

An hour later Cripplestraw shambled again into the passage, on the same errand.

Maisie's very poorly; & he hopes that you'll come Mis'ess anne. He wants to see ye very particular about the French.

Anne would have gone in a moment but for the fear that some one besides the farmer might encounter her; & she answered as before.

Another hour passed, & the wheels of a vehicle were heard. Cripplestraw had come for the third time, with a horse & gig: he was dressed in his best clothes, & brought with him on this occasion a basket containing raisins, almonds, oranges & sweet cakes. Offering them to her as a gift from the old farmer he repeated his same request for her to accompany him; the gig & best mare having been sent as an additional inducement.

"I believe the old gentleman is in love with you anne," said her mother.

"Why could'nt he drive down himself to see me?" Anne enquired of Cripplestraw.

"He wants you at the house, please."

"Is Mr Festus with him?"

"No – he's away at Weymouth."

"I'll go": said she.

"And I may come & meet you?" said Bob.

"There's my letter – what shall I do about that?" She said instead of answering & looking to him. "Take my letter to the post-office, & you may come": said she added.

Cripplestraw retreated to the door till she should be ready. "What letter is it?" said her mother. He said yes, & went out.

"Only one to John," said Anne. I have asked him to forgive my suspicion. I could do no less.

Do you want to marry him? asked Mrs Loveday bluntly.

"Mother!"

Well, he will take that letter as an encouragement. Can't you see that he will, you foolish girl?"

Anne did see instantly. "Of course!" she said. "Tell Robert that he need not go."

She went to her room to secure the letter. It was gone from the mantelpiece, & on enquiry it was found that the miller, seeing it there, had sent David with it to Weymouth [hours] ago. Anne said nothing, & set out for Overcombe Hall with Cripplestraw.

"William," said Mrs Loveday to the miller when Anne was gone, & Bob had resumed his work in the garden; did you get that letter sent off on purpose?

Well, I did. I wanted to make sure of it. John likes her; & now 'twill be made up; & why shouldn't he marry her? I'll start him in business if [so] she'll have him."

"~~Became~~ But she is likely to marry Festus Derriman".

"I don't want her to marry anybody but John", said the miller doggedly.

Not if she's in love with Bob, & has been for years, & he with her? asked his wife triumphantly.

- In love with Bob - & he with her?" repeated Loveday.

"Certainly," said she, going off & leaving him to his reflections.

When Anne reached the hall she found old Mr Derriman in his customary chair. His complexion was more ashen, but his movement in rising at her entrance, fastening a chain, & shutting the door behind her, were much the same as usual.

Thank God you've come, my dear girl, he said earnestly. Ah, you don't trip across to read to me now! Why did ye cost me so much to fetch you? Fie! A horse & gig, & a man's time in going three times. And what I sent ye cost a good deal in Weymouth market, now everything is so dear there; & 'twould have cost more if I hadn't bought the raisins & oranges ~~three~~ six months ago when they were cheaper. I tell you this

because we are old friends, & I have nobody else to tell my troubles to. But I don't begrudge anything to ye, since you've come

I am not much pleased to come, even now, said she. What can make you so seriously anxious to see me?

Well, you be a good girl, & true; & I've been thinking that of all people of the next generation that I can trust, you are the best. 'Tis my bonds & my little deeds, such as they be, & the leases, you know, & a few guineas in packets, & more than there, my will, that I have to speak about. Now do ye come this way.

Oh, such things as those! she returned with surprise. I don't understand those things at all.

There's nothing to understand. 'Tis just this: the French will be here within two months – that's certain. I have it on the best authority that the army at Boulogne is ready, the boats equipped, the plans laid; & the Swiss Consul only waits for a tide. Heaven knows what will become o'the men o'these parts. But most likely the women will be spared. Now I'll show ye.

He led her across the hall to a stone staircase of semicircular plan, which conducted to the cellars.

Down here? she said.

Yes; I must trouble ye to come down here. I have thought & thought, & is the woman that can best keep a secret for six months; & I say "Anne Garland" you won't be married before then!"

O no, ~~said~~ murmured the young woman.

I wouldn't expect ye to keep a close tongue after such a thing as that. But it will not be necessary.

When they reached the bottom of the steps he struck a light from a tinderbox, & unlocked the middle one of three doors which appeared in the whitewashed wall opposite. The rays of the candle fell upon the vaulted sides of a long low cellar, littered with decayed woodwork from other parts

of the Hall, among the rest stair-ballusters, carved pinials, tracery panels, & wainscoting. But what most attracted her eye was a small flag-stone turned up in the middle of the floor, & a heap of earth beside it, & a measuring tape.

Derriman went to the corner of the cellar, & pulled out a clapped box from under the straw. "You be rather heavy my dear eh," he said affectionately addressing the box, "as paliphat it. But you are going to be put in a safe place, you know, or that rascal will get hold of ye, & carry ye off & ruin me." He then with some difficulty lowered the box into the hole, raked in the earth upon it, & lowered the flag-stone, which he was a long time in fixing to his satisfaction. Miss Garland, who was romantically interested, helped him to brush away the fragments of loose earth; & when he had scattered over the floor a little of the straw that lay about they again ascended to upper air.

"Is this all, sir?" said Anne

"Just a moment longer, honey. Will you come into the great parlour?"

She followed him thither. "If anything happens to me while the fighting is going on – it may be on these very fields – you will know what to do," he resumed. "But first please sit down again, there's a dear, whilst I write what's in my head. See, best there's paper & a new quill that I've afforded myself for it.

"What a strange business – I don't think I much like it, Mr. Derriman," she said seating herself.

He had by this time begun to write, & murmured as he wrote:

"Twenty-three and half from N.W. Sixteen and three-quarters from N.E." There,

(The new quill I'll scratch a few words with first, said Anne.

That's all – now seal it up & keep it safe till I ask ye for it, or you hear of my being trampled down by the enemy.

"What does it mean?" she asked as she received the paper.

"Clk! Ha-ha! Why that's the distance of the box from the two corners of the cellar. I measured it before you came – And, my honey: to make all sure, if the French soldiery are after ye, tell your mother the

or any other friend,
meaning out, in case they should put ye to death, & the secret be lost. But
that I am sure I hope they wont do — though your pretty face will be a sad
bait to the soldiers. I often wish'd you was my daughter, honey; & got in
have
there times the less cares a man has the better, so I am glad you have'nt. Shall my man drive you home?

"No, no," she said, much depressed by the words he had uttered. I can find my way. You need not trouble to come down.

Then take care of the paper. And if you outlive me you'll find I have not forgot you.

End of Part VII

Trumpet-Major. Part VIII (Aug.)

Chapter XXV.

Festus stays his love.

Festus Derriman had remained in Weymouth all that day, his horse being sick at stables; but wishing to coax or bully a remount from his uncle for the coming summer, he set off on foot for Overcombe early in the morning. When he drew near the village, or rather the Hall, which was a mile from the village, he overtook a slim quick-eyed woman sauntering along at a leisurely pace. She was fashionably dressed in a green spencer, with "Mameluke" sleeves, & wore a velvet Spanish hat & feather.

"Good afternoon t'ye, ma'am," said Festus, throwing a sword & pistol air into his greeting. "You are out for a walk."

"I am out for a walk, captain," said the lady, who had critically observed him from the crevice of her eye without seeming to do, much more than continue her demure look forward, & gave the title as a sop to his apparent character.

From Weymouth?—I'd swear it, ma'am. 'Pon my honour I would!

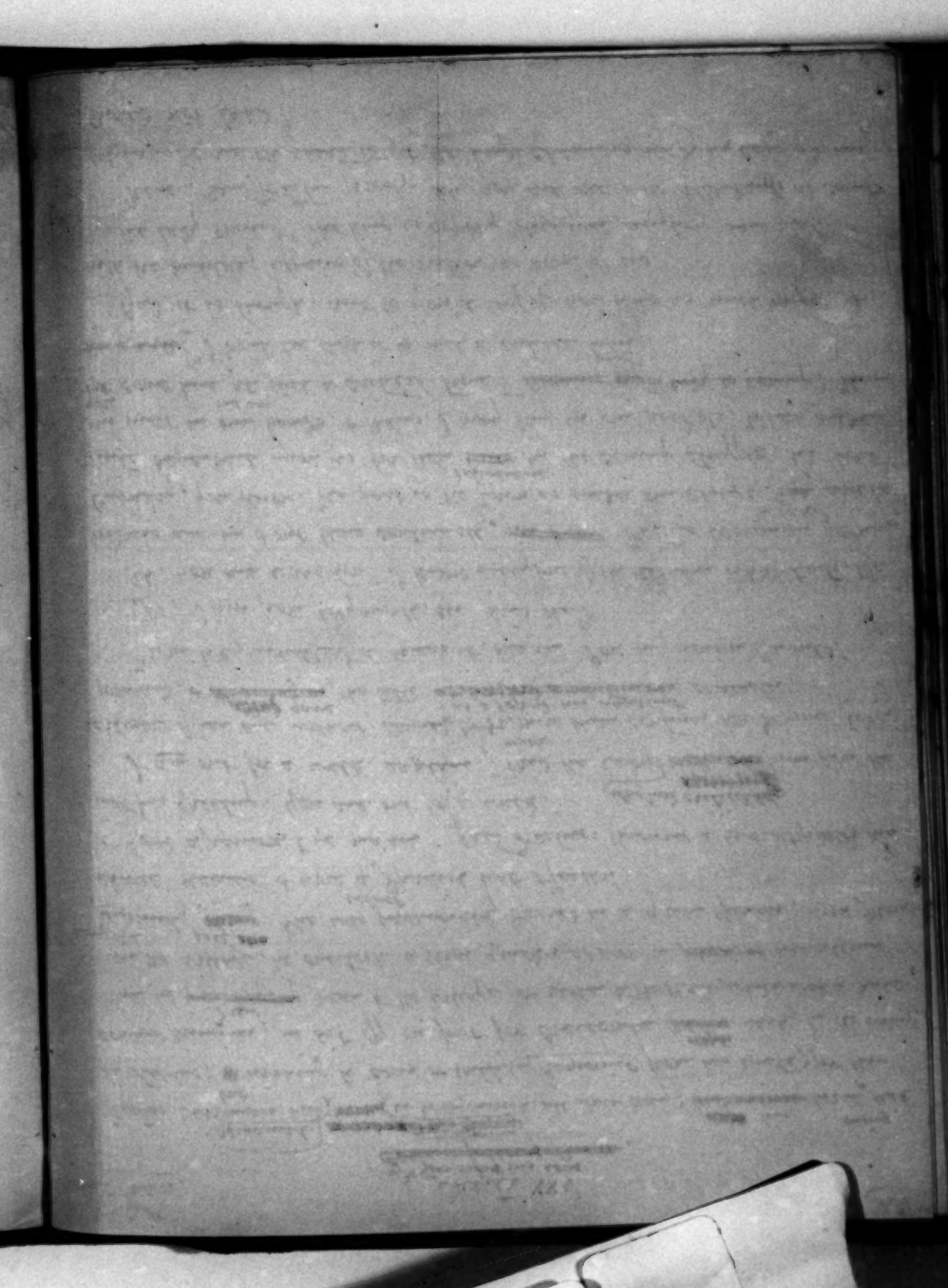
"Yes; I am from Weymouth, sir," said she.

Ah, you are a visitor? I know every one of the regular inhabitants. We Soldiers are in & out there continually, you know. Festus Derriman, Yeomanry Cavalry, you know. The fact is the town is under our charge. The folks will be quite dependent upon us for their deliverance in the coming struggle. We hold our lives in our hands, & theirs, I may say, in our pockets. What made you come here, ma'am, at such a critical time? "Because everybody is coming? The king visits[" "I don't see that it is such a critical time."

Gad, it is though; and so you'd say if you was as much mixed up with the military affairs of the nation as some of us.

The lady smiled. "The king is coming this year, anyhow," said she.

Never, said Festus firmly. Ah, you are one of the attendants at court perhaps, come on ahead to get the king's chambers ready, in case Boney should not land?



No, she said. I am connected with the theatre, though not just at the present moment. I form the company when they arrive for the season.
Festus surveyed her with interest.
"By gad now, & is it so? Well, ma'am, what part do you play?
I am mostly the leading lady — the heroine," she said, drawing herself up with dignity.
"I'll come & have a look at ye, if all's well, & the landing is put off — hang me if I don't.... Hullo, hullo, what do I see?"
His eyes were stretched towards a distant field, which Anne Garland was at that moment hastily crossing, on her way from the hall to the village.
"I must be off — good-day to ye, dear creature!" he exclaimed, stooping, kissing her lightly, & hurrying forward
The lady said "Oh, you droll monster!", as she smiled & watched him stride ahead.
Festus bounded on over the hedge, across the intervening patch of green, & into the field which Anne was still crossing. In a moment or two she looked back, & seeing who followed felt rather alarmed, though she determined to show no difference in her outraged carriage. But to maintain her natural gait was beyond her powers. She quickened her pace — [illegible] quickened her pace — suddenly, however, for he gained upon her, & when within a few strides of her & exclaimed "Well, my darling!" Anne started off at a run.
Festus was already out of breath, & soon found that he was not likely to overtake her. On she went without turning her head, till an unusual noise behind compelled her to look round. His face was in the act of falling back, he swerved on one side, & dropped like a log upon a convenient hedge-row bank which bordered the path. There he lay quite still.
Anne was somewhat alarmed; & after standing at gaze for two or three minutes, drew nearer to him, a step & half at a time; wondering & doubting; as a meek ewe draws near to some strolling vagabond who flings himself on the grass near the flock.
"He is in a swoon!" she murmured
Her heart beat quickly & she looked around. Nobody was in sight. She advanced

a step nearer still, & ~~looked~~ observed him again. Apparently his face was getting ~~turned~~ turning to a livid hue, & his breathing had become ~~stopped~~ obstructed.

"'Tis not a ~~stroke~~ swoon; 'tis apoplexy!" she said in deep distress. "I ought to untie his neck." But she was afraid to do this, & only drew a little closer still.

Miss Garland was now within three feet of him; whereupon the senseless man, who could hold his breath no longer, sprang to his feet & darted at her, saying "Ha-ha! A scheme for a kiss!" She felt his arm slipping round her neck; but twirling about on her own axis with amazing dexterity she wriggled from his embrace & ran away along across the field. The force with which she had extricated herself was sufficient to throw Festus upon the grass, & by the time that he got upon his legs again she was many yards off. Uttering ~~a cry~~ a word which was not a blessing he immediately gave chase; & thus they ran till Anne entered a meadow divided down the middle by a brook about six feet wide. A narrow plank was thrown loosely across at the point where the path traversed this stream, & Anne reached it, & she at once scampered over. At the other side she turned her head to gather the particulars of the situation, which were that Festus, Derriman ~~would~~ could overtake her anon now. By a sudden precaution she stooped, seized the end of the plank, & endeavoured to drag it away from the opposite bank. But the weight was too great for her to do more than slightly move it, & with a desperate sigh she ran on again, having lost many valuable seconds.

But her attempt, though ineffectual in dragging it down, had been enough to unsettle the little bridge; & when Derriman reached the middle, which he did half a minute later, the plank turned over on its edge, ~~and~~ tilting him bodily into the river. The water was remarkably not deep, but as the yeoman fell flat on his stomach he was completely immersed; & it was some time before he could drag himself out. When he arose, dripping on the bank, & looked round, Anne had vanished from the mead. Then Festus's ~~the~~ eyes glowed like carbuncles, & he gave voice to ~~a~~ fearful imprecations, shaking his fist in the soft summer spring air towards Anne in a way that was terrible for any maiden to behold. Wading back through the stream he walked along its bank with a heavy tread, the water running

from his coat-tails, wrists, & the tips of his ears. ~~collar, his elbows, & hat brim~~ in silvery dribbles that sparkled pleasantly in the sun. Thus he hastened away, & went round by a bye-path to the Hall.

~~Anne~~ Meanwhile, the author of his troubles, was rapidly drawing nearer to the mill, & soon, to her inexpressible delight, she saw Bob coming to meet her. She had heard the flounce, & feeling more secure from her pursuer had dropped her pace to a quick walk. No sooner did she reach Bob than she flung herself into his arms, overcome by the excitement of the moment. ~~clasped him~~ Bob instantly enclosed her in an embrace so very thorough ~~embrace~~ that there was no possible danger of her falling, whatever degree of exhaustion might have given rise to her somewhat unexpected action; & in this attitude they silently remained till it was borne in upon Anne that the present was the first time in her life that she had ever been in such a position. Her face then burnt like a sunset, & she did not know how to look up at him. ~~So she still remained~~ Feeling at length quite safe she suddenly ~~thought she~~ resolved not to give way to her first impulse to tell him the whole of what had happened, lest there should be a dreadful quarrel & fight between Bob & the yeoman, & great difficulties ~~embroils~~ caused in the Loveday family on her account, the miller having impatient wheat transactions with the Derrimans.

"You seem frightened, dearest Anne," said Bob tenderly.

"Yes," she replied. "I saw a man I did not like the look of; & he was inclined to follow me. But worse than that I am troubled about the French. Oh Bob, I am afraid you will be killed, & my mother & John & your father & all of us hunted down!"

Now I have told you, dear little heart, that it cannot be. We shall drive 'em into the sea after a battle or two, even if they land, which I don't believe they will. We've got ninety sail of the line, & though it is rather unfortunate that we should have declared war against Spain at this treacherous time, that's enough for all." And Bob went into elaborate statistics of the navy, army, militia, & volunteers, to prolong the time of holding her. When he had done speaking he drew rather a heavy breath.

"What's the matter Bob?"

"I haven't been yet to offer myself as a sea feneille; & I ought to have done it long ago!"

"You are only one. Surely they can do without you?"

Bob shook his head. She had arose from her recital position, her eye catching his with a shamefaced expression of having given way at last. Loveday drew from his pocket a paper, & said as they slowly walked on, "Here's something to make us brave & patriotic. I bought it in Weymouth. Is it not a stirring picture?"

It was a hieroglyphic profile of Napoleon. The hat represented a maimed French eagle; the face was ingeniously made up of human carcases, knotted & writhing together in such distortions as to form a physiognomy; a hand or stock, shaped to resemble the English Channel, encircled his throat, & seemed to choke him; his epaulette was a hand tearing a cobweb that represented the treaty of peace with England; & his ear was a woman crouching over a dying child.

"It is dreadful," said Anne. "I don't like to see it."

She had recovered from her emotion, & walked along beside him with a grave subdued face. Bob did not like to assume the privileges of an accepted lover & draw her hand through his arm; for, conscious that she naturally belonged to a politer grade than his own, he feared lest her exhibition of tenderness were an impulse which cooler moments might regret. A perfect Paul & Virginia life had not yet absolutely set in for him, as yet, & it may not to be hastened by force. When they had passed over the bridge into the mill-front they saw the miller standing at the door with a face of concern.

"Since you have been gone," he said, "a Government man has been here, & to all the houses, taking down the numbers of the women & children, & their ages, & the number of horses & waggons that can be mustered, in case they have to retreat inland out of the way of the invading army."

The little family gathered themselves together, all feeling the crisis more seriously than they liked to express. Mrs Loveday thought how ridiculous a thing social ambition was in such a conjuncture as this; & vowed that she would leave Anne

to love what she would. Anne too forgot the little peculiarities of speech & manner in Bob, which sometimes jarred for a moment upon her more refined sense; & was thankful for their love & protection in this looming trouble.

On going upstairs she remembered the paper which Farmer Derriman had given her, & searched in her bosom for it. She could not find it there. "I must have left it on the table", she said to herself. "It did not matter: she remembered every word." She took a pen & wrote a duplicate, which she put safely away.

But Anne was wrong in her supposition. She had, after all, placed the paper where she supposed, & there it ought to have been; But in escaping from Festus when he feigned apoplexy it had fallen out upon the grass. Five minutes after that event, when pursuer & pursued were two or three fields ahead, the gaily dressed woman whom the gipsy had overtaken peeped cautiously through the hedge into the corner of the field, which had been the scene of the scramble, & seeing the paper she climbed over & secured it, Loosening the wafer without tearing the sheet she read the memorandum within. Being unable to make anything of it, & wearing the seamstress put it in her pocket & dismissing the matter from her mind went on by the bye-path until she came to the back of the mill. Here behind the hedge she stood & surveyed the old building for some time, after which she meditatively turned & retraced her steps towards Weymouth.

Chapter XXVI
The alarm.

We pass on to a fine May night, when Mrs Loveday was awakened by the boom of a distant gun. She told the miller, & they listened awhile. The sounds were not repeated, but such was the state of their feelings that Mr Loveday went to Bob's room & asked if he had heard it. Bob was wide awake, looking out of the window; he had heard the ominous sound, & was inclined to investigate the matter. While the father & son were dressing they fancied that a glare seemed to be rising in the sky in the direction of the beacon-hill. Not wishing to alarm Anne & her mother the miller assured them that Bob & himself were merely going out of doors to enquire into the cause of the report,

after which together. they plunged into the gloom & a few steps' progress opened up the more of the sky, which was irradiated by a lurid light, but whether it came from the beacon or a rare distant point they were unable to clearly tell. They pushed on rapidly towards higher ground. Their excitement was merely of a piale with that of all men at this critical juncture. Everywhere expectation was at fever heat.

For the last year or two only five & twenty miles of shallow water had divided quiet English homesteads from an enemy's army of a hundred & fifty thousand men. We had taken the matter lightly enough, eating & drinking as in the days of Noe, & singing satires without end. We punned on Buonaparte & his gunboats, & chalked his effigy on stage coaches, & published them in prints. Still, between these bursts of hilarity it was sometimes recollected that England was the only European country which had not succumbed to the mighty man who was by means, & with the support of, a traitor, less than human in his callousness & more than human in will; that our antipathy spirit for resistance was greater than our strength, & that the Channel was often calm. Boats built of wood which was greenly growing in its native forest three days before it was bent as wales to their sides, were ridiculous enough; but they might be, after all, sufficient for a single trip between two visible shores.

The English watched Buonaparte in these preparations, & Buonaparte watched the English. At the distance of Boulogne details were lost, but we were impressed on fine days by the vivid sight of a huge army moving & twinkling like a school of mackerel under the rays of the sun. The regular way of passing an afternoon in the coast towns was to stroll up to the signal post & chat with the lieutenant on duty there about the latest inimical object seen at sea. About once a week there appeared in the newspapers either a paragraph concerning some adventurous English gentleman who had sailed out in a pleasure-boat till he lay near enough to Boulogne to see Buonaparte standing on the heights among his marshals; or else some lines about a mysterious stranger with a foreign accent, who, after collecting a vast deal of information on our resources, had hired a boat at a Southern port, & vanished with it towards France before his intention could be divined.

In forecasting his grand venture Bonaparte postulated the help of Providence to a remarkable degree. Just at the hour when his troops were aboard the flat-bottomed boats, & ready to sail, there was to be a great fog, that should spread a vast obscurity over the length & breadth of the Channel, & keep the English blind to events on the other side. The fog was to last twenty four hours, after which it might clear away. A dead calm was to prevail simultaneously with the twofold object of affording the fog, & the boats easy transit, & doing on ships to the motionless. Thirdly, there was to be a spring tide, which should combine its manoeuvres with those of the fog & calm.

Among the many thousands of minor Englishmen whose lives were affected by these tremendous designs may be numbered our old acquaintance Corporal Tullidge, who spotted the crushed arm, & poor old Simon Burden. The dazed veteran who had fought at Minden. Instead of settling comfortably in the settle of "The Duke of York" at Owlscombe they were obliged to keep watch on the hill. They made themselves as comfortable as was possible under the circumstances, dwelling in a hut of clods & turf, with a brick chimney for cooking. Here they observed the nightly progress of the moon & stars, grew familiar with the heaving of moles, the dancing of rabbits on the hillocks, the distant hoot of owls, & the bark of foxes from woods but saw not a sign of the enemy. As night after night passed further inland. They walked round the two ricks — one being of furze for a quick flare, the other of turf for a long slow red glow — which it was their duty to fire at a signal. They thought & talked of old times, & drank from a large pewter flagon that was filled every day.

Bob & his father soon became aware that the light was from the beacon. By the time that they reached the top it was one mass of towering flame, from which the sparks fell in the green herbage like a fiery dew. The forms of the two old men being seen passing & repassing in the midst of the fire. The Lovedays, who regarded the scene for a moment & then came up on the smoky side, emerged into the light.

"Who goes there!" said Corporal Tullidge, shouldering a pike with his sound arm. "O, 'tis neighbour Loveday!"

"Did you get your signal to fire it from the east?" said the miller hastily.

"No. From Abbotsbury Beach."

But you are not to go by a coast signal!

"Chok'it all, wasn't the Lord Lieutenant's direction, whenever you see Rejbarrows Beacon burn to the nor'east'ard, or Eggardon to the nor'west'ard, or the actual presence of the enemy on the shore?"

"But is he here?"

"No doubt o't! The beach light is only just gone down, & Simon heard the guns even better than I." "Hark, hark, I hear 'em!" said Bob.

They listened with parted lips, the night wind blowing through Simon Burden's few teeth as through the ruins of Stonehenge. From far down on the lower levels came the noise of wheels & the tramp of horses upon the turnpike road.

"Well, there must be something in it," said Miller Loveday gravely. "Bob, will go home & make the women-folk safe, & then I'll don my soldier's clothes & be off. God knows where our company will assemble."

They hastened down the hill, & on getting into the road waited & listened again. Travellers began to come up & pass them in vehicles of all descriptions. It was difficult to attract their attention in the dim light, but by standing on the top of a wall which fenced the road Bob was at last seen. "What's the matter?" he cried to a butcher who was flying past in his cart, his wife sitting behind him.

"The French have landed," said the man without drawing rein.

"Where?" shouted Bob.

"In West Bay; & all Weymouth is in an uproar," replied the voice now faint in the distance.

Bob & his father hastened on till they reached their own house. As they had expected, Anne & her mother, in common with most of the people, were both dressed, & stood at the door bonnetted & shawled, listening to the traffic on the neighbouring highway, Mrs Loveday having secured what little money & small valuables they possessed in a large pocket which extended all round her waist, & added considerably to her diameter.

"'Tis true enough," said the miller. "He's come. You & Anne & the maid must

As soon as they were out of sight Bob went off for a strike, & his father, first new-flinting his firelock, proceeded to don his uniform, pipe-claying his breeches with such cursory haste as to bespatter his black gaiters with the same ornamental compound. Finding when he was ready that no bugle had as yet sounded he went with David to the cart-house, dragged out the waggon, & put therein some of the most useful & easily-handled goods, in case there might be an opportunity for conveying them away. By the time this was done, & the waggon pushed back & locked in, Bob had returned with his weapon, somewhat mortified at being doomed to this low form of defence. The miller ~~threw~~ gave his son a parting grasp of the hand, & arranged to meet him at Bere at the first opportunity if the news were true; if happily false, here at their own house.

Begad! he ejaculated, looking at his stock of flints.

What? said Bob.

I have got no ammunition: not a round!

Then what's the use of going? asked his son.

The miller paused. "Oh, I'll go," he said. "Perhaps somebody will lend me a little if I get into a hot corner."

The bugle had been blown ere this, & Loveday the father disappeared towards the place of assembly, his empty cartridge-box behind him. Bob seized a brace of loaded pistols which he had brought

be off to cousin Jim's at Bere, & when you get there you must do as they do. I must assemble with the company."

"And I?" said Bob.

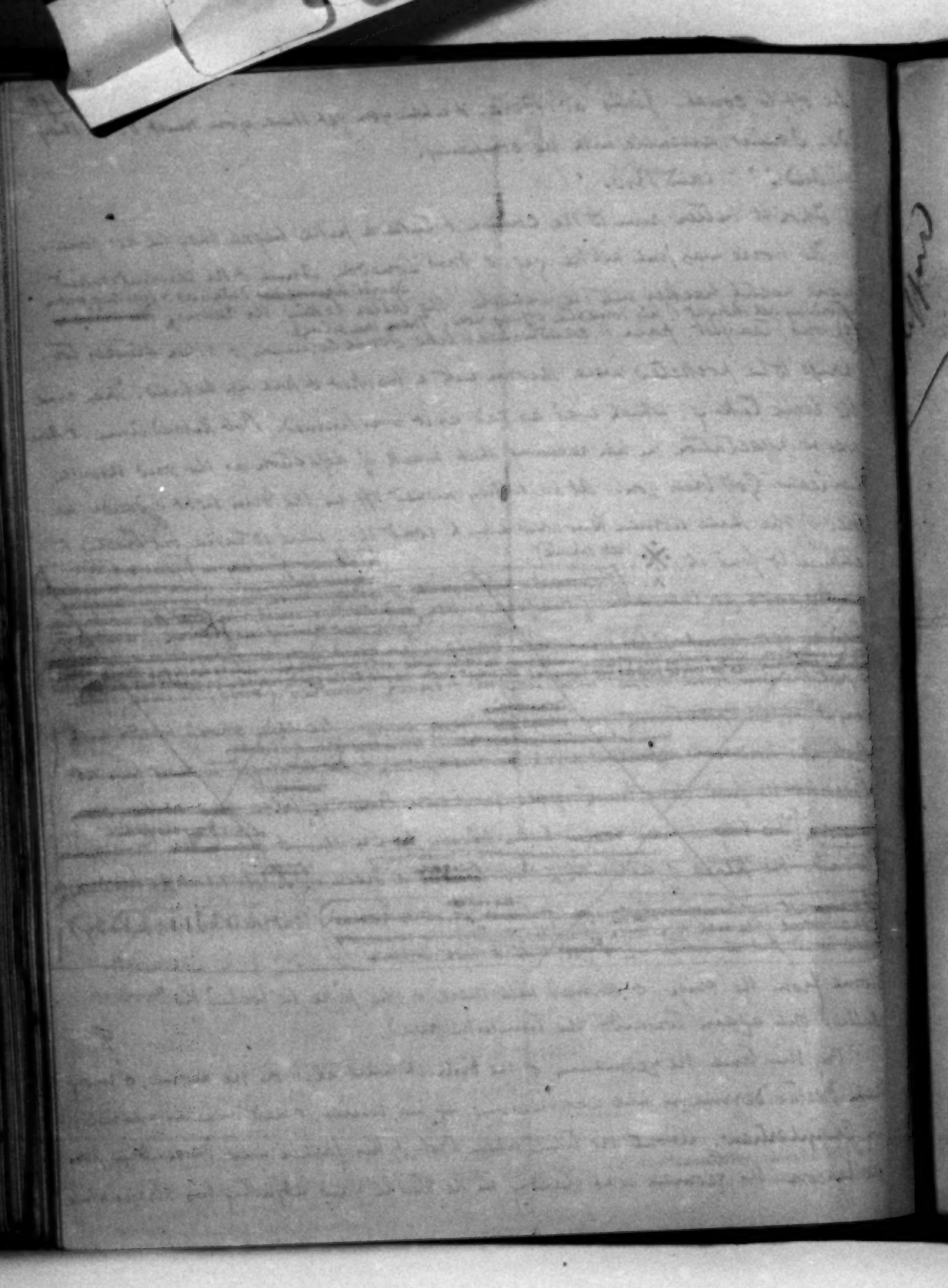
"Thou'st better run to the chimet, & take a pike before they be all gone."

The horse was put into the gig, & Mrs Loveday, Anne, & the servant-maid were hastily packed into the vehicle, the latter taking the reins, David Hemmings duties as a fighting man forbidding all thought of his domestic office now. They the silver spoons, tea-pot, pair of candlesticks like Doric Columns, & other articles too large to be pocketed, were thrown into a basket & put up behind. Then came the leave taking, which was as sad as it was hurried. Bob kissed Anne, & there was no affectation in her receiving that mark of affection as she said through her tears "God bless you." At last they moved off in the dim light of dawn, neither of the three women knowing which road they were to take, but trusting to chance to find it. ※ [back opposite]

[redacted]

home from the ships, & armed with there, & the pike, he locked the door & sallied out again towards the turnpike road.

By this time the yeomanry of the district were also on the move, & among them Festus Derriman, who was sleeping at his uncle's, & had been awakened by Cripplestraw. About the time when Bob & his father were descending from the beacon the stalwart yeoman was standing in the stable-yard, adjusting his straps, while



Cripplestraw saddled the horse. Festus clanked up & down, looked gloomily at the beacon, heard the retreating carts & carriages, & called Cripplestraw to him, who came from the stable leading the horse at the same moment that Uncle Benjy peeped unobserved from an oriel window above their heads, the light of the beacon fire touching up his features to the complexion of an old brass clock-face.

"I think met before I start," said Festus, whose lurid visage was undergoing a bleaching process curious to look upon, "you shall go on to Weymouth, & make a bold enquiry whether the cowardly enemy is on shore as yet, or only looming in the bay."

"I'd go in a moment, sir," said the other, "if I had n't my bad leg again. I should have joined my company afore this; but they said at last drill that I was too old. So I must wait up in the loft for tidings as soon as I have packed you off, poor gentleman."

"Do such alarms as these, Cripplestraw, ever happen without foundation? Buonaparte is a wretch, a miserable wretch; & this may only be a false alarm to disappoint such as me."

"Oh no, sir. Oh no."

"But sometimes there are false alarms."

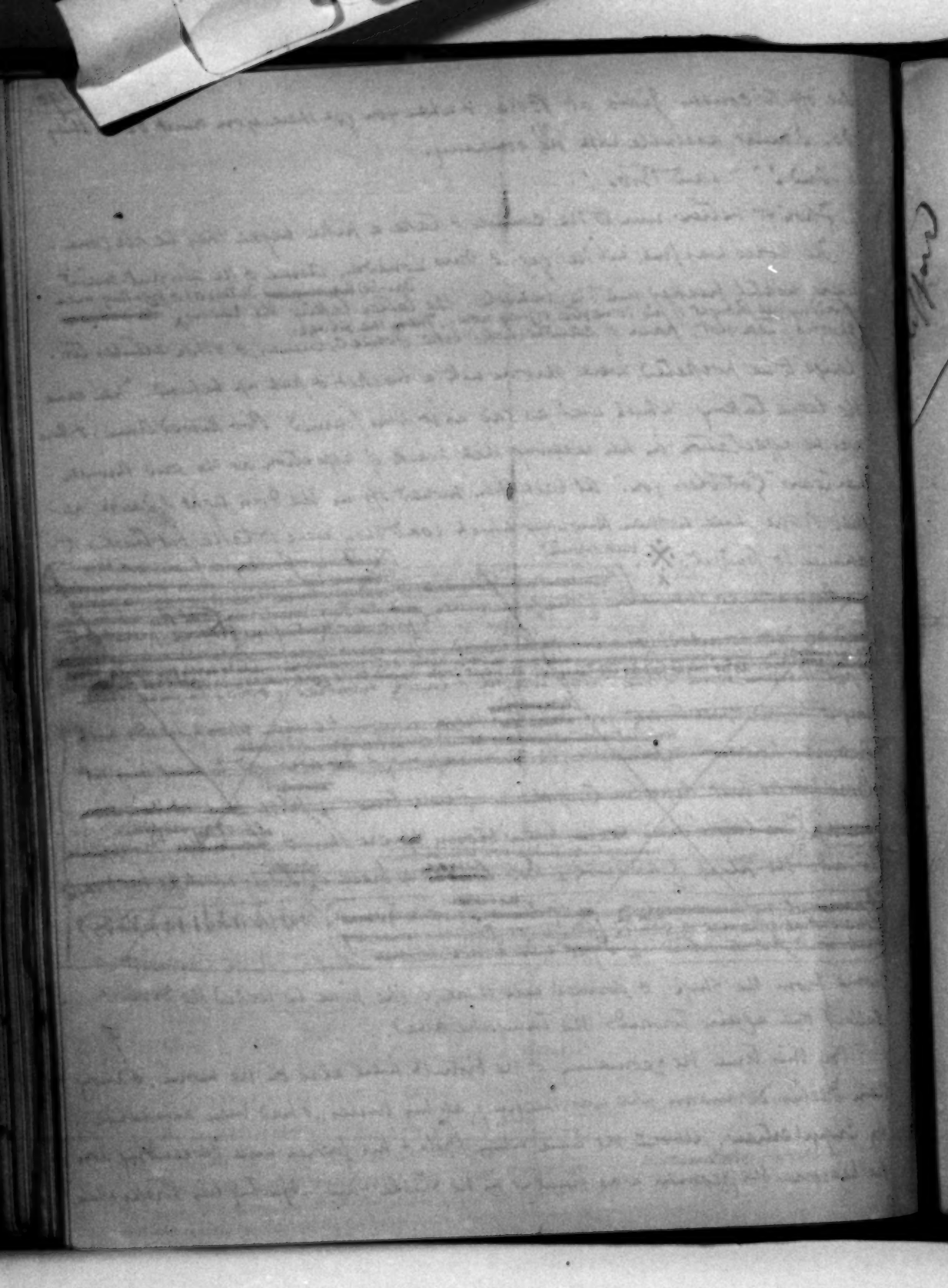
"Well, sir, yes. There was a pretended sally of gun-boats last year."

"And was there nothing else pretended — something more like this, for instance?"

Cripplestraw shook his head. "I notice yer modesty, Mr Festus, in making light of things. But there never was, sir. You may depend upon't he's come. Thank God my duty as a Local don't require me to go to the front, but only the valiant men like my master. Ah, if Boney could only see ye now, sir, he'd know too well that there is nothing to be got from such a determined skilful officer but blows & musket-balls."

"Yes, yes.... Cripplestraw, if I ride off to Weymouth & meet 'em, all my training will be lost. No skill is required as a forlorn hope."

"True, that's a point sir. You would outshine 'em all, & be picked off at the very beginning as a too dangerous brave man."



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"True, that's a point sir. You would outshine 'em all, & be picked off at the very beginning as a too dangerous brave man."

But if I stay here, & urge on the faint-hearted ones, & get up into the turret stair by that gateway, & pop at the invaders through the loophole, I shouldn't be so completely wasted, should I."

"You would not Mr Derriman. But, as you were going to say yesh, the fire in yer veins wont let ~~yet~~ ye do that. You are valiant; very good: you don't want to ~~make~~ husband yer valiance at home. The thing is plain."

"If my birth had been more obscure," murmured the yeoman, "& I had only been in the militia, for instance, or among the humble pikemen, so much wouldn't have been expected of me — of my fiery nature..... Cripplestraw, is there a drop of brandy to be got at in the house? I don't feel very well.

"Dear nephew," said the old gentleman from above, whom neither of the others had as yet noticed: "I haven't any spirits opened — so unfortunate! But there's a beautiful barrel of ~~cider~~ crab-apple in draught. And there's some cold tea from last night."

What, is he listening? said Hester staring up. "I warrant how glad he is to see me forced to go, ~~he can't~~ called out of bed without breakfast, & he quite safe, & sure to escape because he's an old man!... Cripplestraw I like being in the yeomanry cavalry; but I wish I hadn't been in the ranks: I wish I had been only the surgeon, to stay in the rear while the bodies are brought back to him — I mean, I should have thrown my heart at such a time as this more into the labour of restoring wounded men & joining their shattered limbs together — u-u-ugh! — more than I can into causing the wounds... I am too humane, Cripplestraw, for the ranks!"

"Yes, yes!" said his man, depressing his spirits to a kindred level. "And yet, such is fate, that instead of joining men's limbs together you'll have to get your own joined — poor young soldier! — all through having such a warlike ~~ghost~~ soul."

"Yes," murmured Hester, & paused. "You can't think how strange I feel here, Cripplestraw," he continued, "~~the~~ ~~and the~~ ~~shake~~ ~~faint~~ laying ~~my~~ his hand upon his waistcoat. "How I do wish I was only the surgeon!" ‡

He slowly mounted, & Uncle Benjy in the meantime sang to himself as he

looked on: Twenty-three and half from N.W. Sixteen and three quarters fra N.E.

"What's that old mummy ~~a~~ singing?" said Hestus savagely.

"Only a hymn for preservation from our enemies, dear nephew," meekly ~~said~~ replied the farmer who had heard the remark. Twenty-three and half from N.W.!

Hestus allowed his horse to move on a few paces, & then turned again, as if struck by a happy invention. "Cripplestraw, he began, with an artificial laugh: I am obliged to confess after all: I must see her! 'Tis'd nature that makes me draw back; 'tis love. I must go & look for her."

"A woman, sir?"

I did'nt want to confess it; but 'tis a woman. Strange that I should be drawn so entirely against my natural ~~wish~~ wish ~~to~~ to rush at 'em!"

Cripplestraw seeing which way the wind blew, found it advisable to blow in harmony. "Ah, now at last I see, sir! ~~You're~~ Spite ~~that~~ that few men like that be worthy to command ye! (spite ~~that~~ that) You could rush on, ~~with~~ marshal the troops to victory as I may say; but then — what of it? — There's ~~no~~ then unhappy fate of being smit with ~~the~~ the eyes of a woman; & you are unmanned... ~~Mr~~ maister Derriman, who is himself when he's got a woman round his neck like a millstone?

It is something like that.

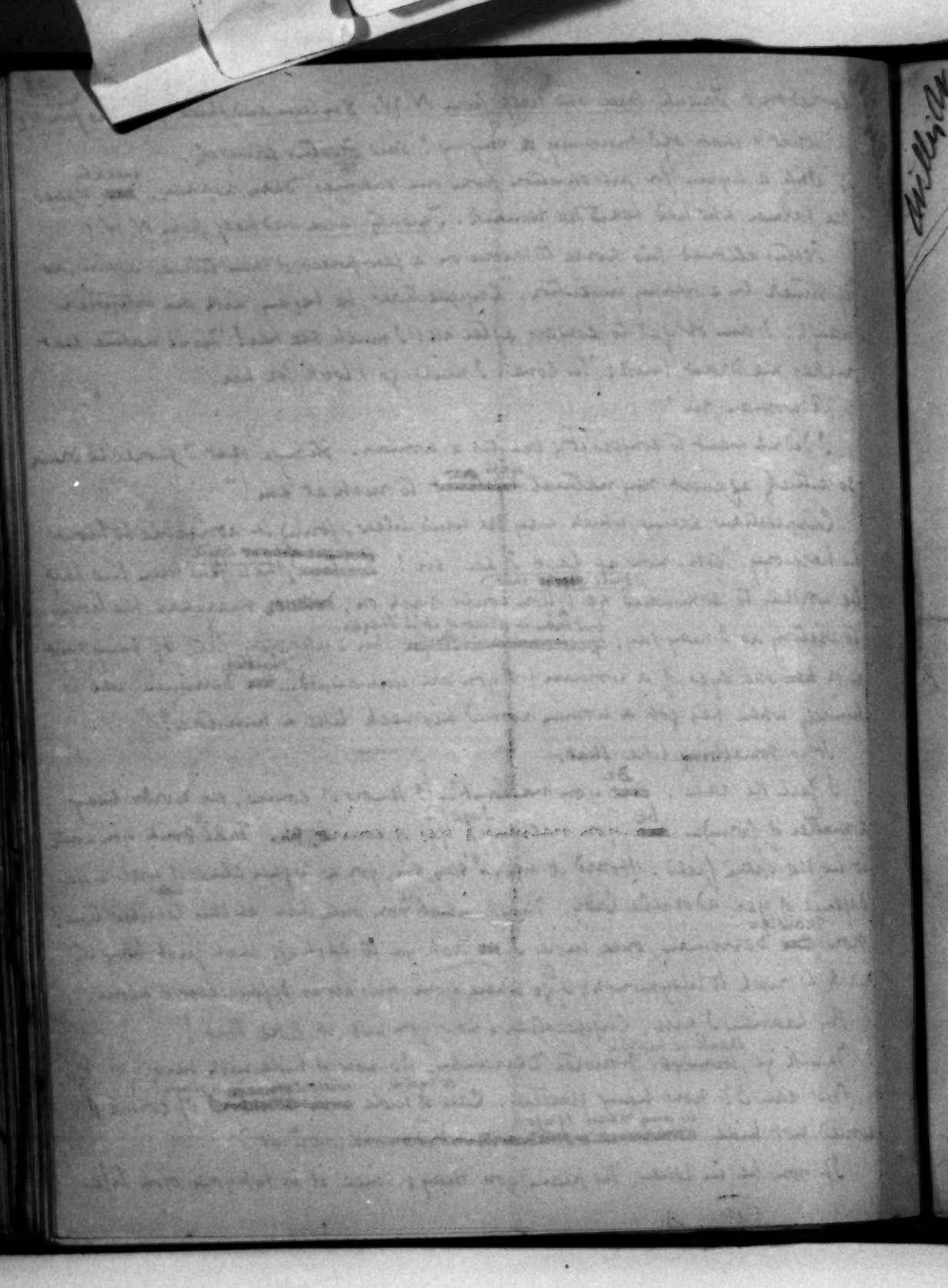
I feel the case. ~~Are~~ Be you valiant? — (I know of course, the words being a matter of form) — ~~are~~ be you valiant? I ask? Yes of course, ~~sir~~ Then don't you waste it in the open field. Hoard it up, I say, sir, for a higher class of war — the defence of yer adorable lady. Think what you owe her at this terrible time! Now ~~Mr~~ maister Derriman, once more I ~~see~~ ask ye to cast off that first haughty wish to rush to Weymouth; & to go where your mis'ess is defenceless & alone."

By heaven I will, Cripplestraw, now you put it like that!

Thank ye, ~~sir~~. thank ye heartily maister Derriman. Go now, & hide with her.

But can I? now hang flattery. Can a man & hide without a stain? Of course I would not hide ~~any~~ in any mean sense ~~whatever~~; no — not I!"

If you be in love, 'tis plain you may; since it is not your own life



but another's that you are concerned for, & only save your own because you it can't be helped.

'Tis true, Cripplestraw, in a sense. But will it be understood that way? Will they see it as ~~anything would~~ a brave hiding?

Now sir, if you had not been in love I own to ye that hiding would look queer. But being to save the tears, groans, fits, & swoundings, & perhaps death, of a comely young woman, yer principle is good: you honourably retreat because you be too gallant to advance. This sounds strange, ye may say, sir; but it is plain enough to less privy minds".

Festus did for a moment try to uncover his teeth in a natural smile, but it died away. Cripplestraw, you flatter me. Or do you mean it?.... Well, there's truth in it. I am more gallant in going to her than in marching to the shire. But we cannot be too careful about our good names, we soldiers. I must not be seen. I'm off."

Cripplestraw opened the humble wicket which closed the arch under the porter's gateway, & Festus passed under, Uncle Benjy singing 'Twen'-ty three' and half' from N.W. with a sort of sublime ecstasy, feeling as Rotulo had observed, that his money was safe. & that the French would not probably molest an old man in such a ragged, coat as that he wore, which he had taken the precaution to borrow from a scarecrow in one of his fields for the purpose. Festus rode on full of his mission to seek out Anne, & under cover of protecting her retreat accompany her to Bere, where he knew the Lovedays had relatives. In the lane he met Granny Seamore, who having packed up all her possessions in a small basket was retreating to the mountains till all was over. looking up at him through her brass spectacles

"Well Granny, have ye seen the French!" asked Festus, confidently.

"No" she said. "If I had I should ha' seed thee!"

"Faugh!" replied the yeoman & rode on. Just as he reached the old road, which he had intended merely to cross & avoid, his countenance fell. Some troops of regulars, which appeared to be dragoons, were rattling along the road. Festus hastened towards an opposite gate, so as to get within the

field before they should see him. But as ill-luck would have it, as soon as he got inside a party of six or seven of his own yeomanry-cavalry were straggling across the same field, & making for the spot where he was. The dragoons passed without seeing him; but when he turned out into the road again it was impossible to retreat towards Overcombe village because of the yeomen. So he rode straight on, & heard them coming at his heels. There was no other gate, & the highway soon became as straight as a bowstring. Unable thus to turn without meeting them, & caught like an eel in a water-pipe, Festus drew nearer & nearer to the fateful shore. But he did not relinquish hope. Just ahead there was cross-roads, & he might have a chance of slipping down one of them without being seen. On reaching this spot he found that he was not alone. A horseman had come up the right-hand lane, & drawn rein. It was an officer of the German legion, & seeing Festus he held up his hand. Festus rode up to him, & saluted.

"It ist false report!" said the officer. ~~A great lot of fishing-boats have run out of their course~~ Gibraltar

[Space]

Festus was a man again. He felt that nothing was too much for him. The officer after some further explanation of the cause of alarm said that he was going across to the road which led by Lodmoor, to stop the troops & volunteers ~~coming~~ converging from that direction; upon which Festus offered to give information along the Broadway road. The German crossed over & was soon out of sight in the lane, while Festus turned back from the way by which he had come. The party of yeomanry cavalry was rapidly drawing near, & he soon recognised among them the excited voices of Stubb of Puddle Hole, Noakes of Muckleford, & other comrades of his orgies at the hall. It was a magnificent opportunity, & Festus drew his sword. When they were within speaking distance he reined round his charger's head to Weymouth & shouted, "On comrades, on! I am waiting for you. You have been a long time getting up with me, seeing the glorious nature of our deeds to-day!"

"Well said, Derriman, well said," replied the foremost of the riders. "Have you heard anything new?"

"Only that he's here, with his tens of thousands; & that we are to ride to meet him sword in hand as soon as we have assembled in Weymouth."

"O Lord!" said Noakes, with a slight falling of the lower jaw.

"The man who quails now is unworthy of the name of yeoman," said Festus still keeping ahead of the other troopers, & holding up his sword to the sun. "O Noakes – fye, fye! You begin to look pale, man."

"Faith, perhaps you'd look pale," said Noakes with an envious glance upon Festus's daring manner, "if you had a wife & family depending upon you."

"I'll take three frog-eating Frenchmen single-handed!" rejoined Derriman still flourishing his sword.

"They have as good swords as you, Sir; as you will soon find," said another of the yeomen.

"If they were three times armed," said Festus; "ay, thrice three times, I would attempt 'em three to one!..... How do you feel now, my old friend Stubb?" (turning to another of the warriors) "O friend Stubb! No boozing healths to our ladylones in Overcombe Hall this summer as last. Eh, Brownjohn?"

"I am afraid not," said Brownjohn gloomily.

No rattling dinners at Stacie's Hotel, & the King below with his staff. No wrenching off door-knockers & sending 'em to the bakehouse in a pie that nobody calls for. Hacks of cut-&-thrust work rather!

"I suppose so. Right how we may & we shan't get rid of the cursed tyrant before Autumn, & many thousand brave men will lie low before it's done," remarked a young yeoman with a calm face, who meant to do his duty without much talking.

Festus resumed. "No grinning matches at Maiden Castle this summer; no thread-

the-needle at Greenhill Fair, & going into shows, & driving the showman crazy with Cock-a-doodle-doo!"

"I suppose not."

Does it make you seem just a trifle uncomfortable Noakes? Keep up your spirits, old comrade. Come, double quick; we are only ambling on like so many donkey-women; We have to get into Weymouth, join the rest of the troop, & then march Abbotsbury way, as I imagine. At this rate we shan't be well into the thick of battle before twelve o'clock. Spur on, comrades..... No dancing on the green, Lockham, this year, & kissing your partner in the moonlight. You was tender upon that girl: gad, what will become o'her in the struggle!"

"Come, come, Derriman", expostulated Lockham. This is all very well; but I don't care for't. I am as ready to fight as any man, but —

"Perhaps when you get into battle, Derriman, & see what it's like, your courage will cool down a little," added Noakes on the same side, but with secret admiration envy of Hester's reckless bravery

"I shall be bayoneted first," said Hester. "Now let's double quick, & on.

Since Hester was determined to spur on wildly the rest of the yeomen did not like to seem behindhand; & they rapidly approached the town. Had they been calm enough to reflect they might have observed that for the last half hour no carts or carriages had met them on the way, as they had done further back. It was not till the troopers reached the turnpike that they learnt what Hester had known a quarter of an hour before. At the intelligence Derriman sheathed his sword with a sigh; & the party soon fell in with comrades who had arrived there before them. When the source & details of the alarm were been discussed, [illegible]

What – didn't you know of the mistake till now? asked one of More.
Why, when I was dropping over the hill by the cross-roads I looked back & saw that man talking to the messenger, & he must have told him the truth". The speaker pointed to Fenton, upon whom they all turned their indignant eyes. That he had sported with their indecent feelings while knowing the rumour to be baseless was soon apparent to all.

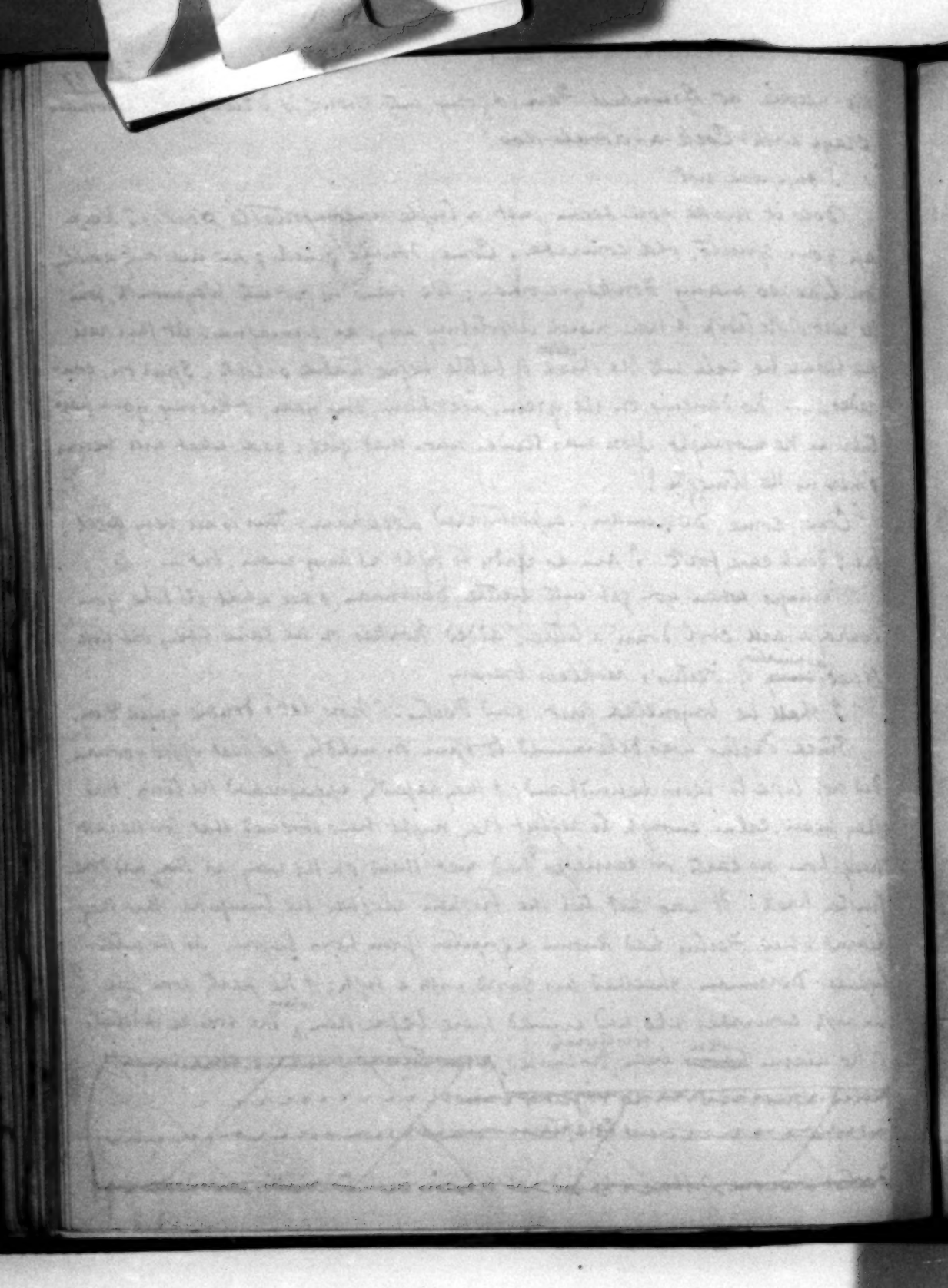
D— him! Beat him black & blue with the flat of our blades! shouted two or three, turning their horses' heads to drop back upon the dominican, in which move they were followed by most of the party.

But Fenton, foreseeing danger from the unexpected revelation, had already conveniently placed a few intervening yards between himself & his fellow yeomen; & now, clapping spurs to his horse, rattled like thunder & lightning up the road homeward. His ready flight added hotness to their pursuit, & as he rode & looked fearfully over his shoulder he could see them following with enraged faces & drawn swords, a position which they kept up for a distance of more than a mile. Then he had the satisfaction of seeing them drop off one by one; & soon he remained alone and his panting charger for the highway.

Chapter XXVII

Danger to Anne.

He stopped & reflected how to turn this mishap to advantage. Balked in his project of entering Weymouth & enjoying congratulations upon his patriotic bearing during the adventure, he sickly considered that he might be able to make some use of his enforced retirement by riding ~~~



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Chapter XXVII

Danger to Anne.

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to overcome & glorify himself in the eyes of Miss Garland before the truth should have reached that hamlet. Having thus decided he spurred on in a better mood. By this time the volunteers were on the march, & as Derriman ascended the road he met the Overcombe company, in which trudged Miller Loveday, shoulder to shoulder with other substantial householders of the place & its neighbourhood, duly equipped with forages crops belts, pieloks, flint-boxes, pickers, worms, magazines, priming horns, keel-ball, & pronatum. There was nothing to be gained by further suppression of the truth, & informing them that the danger was not so immediate as had been supposed, Derriman galloped on. At the end of another mile he met a large number of pikemen, including Bob Loveday, whom the yeoman resolved to sound upon the whereabouts of Anne. The circumstances were such as to lead Bob to speak more frankly than he might have done on reflection, & he told Derriman the direction in which the woman had been sent. Then Derriman informed the group that the report of invasion was false, upon which they all turned & homeward with greatly relieved spirits.

Bob walked beside Derriman's horse for some distance & Loveday had instantly made up his mind to go & look for the woman, & ease their anxiety by letting them know the good news as soon as possible. But he said nothing of this to Derriman during their return together; nor did Derriman tell Bob that he also had resolved to seek them out; & by anticipating every one else in that enterprise, find & thus make a glorious opportunity for bringing Miss Garland to her senses about him. He still resented the mockery that he had received at her hands, & was not disposed to let that insult pass without obtaining some sort of revenge.

As soon as they had parted Derriman cantered on over the hill, meeting on his way the Dorchester company, ninety strong, (known as the "Consideration Company" in those days) under Captain Strickland, & the Puddleton volunteer company, sixty rank & file, under Captain Cunningham, & others, all with muskets piece, & covered with dust. Just passing & leaving them at halt, the word to them, he proceeded rapidly onward in the direction of Bere. Nobody

appeared upon the road for some time, till (after a mile of several miles) he met a stray corporal of volunteers who had told Festus in answer to his inquiry that he had certainly passed no gig full of women of the kind described. Believing that he had missed them by following the highway Derriman turned back into a lane along which they might have journeyed for privacy's sake, notwithstanding the badness & uncertainty of the track.

Arriving again within five miles of Owercombe he at length heard tidings of the wandering vehicle & its precious burden, which, like the ark when carried from the country of the Philistines, had apparently been left to the instincts of the beast that drew it. A labouring man, just at daybreak, had seen the helpless party going slowly up a distant drive, which he pointed out.

No sooner had Festus parted from this informant than he espied Bob approaching, mounted on the miller's second & heavier horse. Bob looked rather surprised, & Festus felt his coming glory in danger.

"They went down that lane", he said, precisely signifying the opposite direction to the true one. "I too have been on the look-out for missing friends."

As Festus was riding back there was no reason to doubt his information, & Lovelady rode on as misdirected. Immediately that he was out of sight Festus reversed his course, & followed the track in which Anne & her companions were last seen to traverse.

This road had been ascended by the gig in question nearly two hours before the present moment. Molly the servant held the reins, Mrs Lovelady sat beside her, & Anne behind. Their progress was but slow, owing partly to Molly's want of skill, & partly to the steepness of the road, which here passed over downs of some extent, & was rarely or never mended. It was an anxious morning for them all, & the beauties of the early summer day fell upon unheeding eyes. They were too anxious even for conjecture, & each sat thinking her own thoughts, occasionally glancing westward, or stopping the horse to listen to sounds from more frequented roads along which other parties were retreating. Once while they listened & gazed thus they saw a glittering in the distance, & heard the tramp of many horses. It was a large body of cavalry going in the direction of Weymouth, the same regiment of dragoons in fact which Festus had seen further on in its course. The women in

the gig had no doubt that they were making at once to engage the enemy. By way of varying the monotony of the journey Molly occasionally burst into tears of horror, believing Bonaparte to be in countenance & habits precisely what the caricatures represented him. Mrs Loveday endeavored to establish cheerfulness by assuring her companions of the natural civility of the French nation, with whom unprotected women were safe from injury, unless through the casual excesses of soldiery beyond control. This was poor consolation to Anne, whose mind was more occupied with Bob than with herself, & a miserable fear that she would never again see him alive so paled her face & saddened her gaze forward that at last her mother said, "Who was you thinking of, my dear?" Anne's only reply was by a look at her mother, with which a tear mingled.

Molly whipped the horse, by which she quickened his pace for five yards, when he again fell into the perverse slowness that showed how fully conscious he was of being the master-mind of the head individual of the four. Whenever there was a pool of water by the road he turned aside to drink a mouthful, & remained there his own time in spite of Molly's tugging at the reins & futile fly-flapping on his buttocks. They were now in the chalk district, where there were no hedges, & a rough attempt at mending the way had been made by throwing down huge lumps of that glaring material in heaps, without attempting to spread it or break them afraid. The jolting here was most distressing, & seemed about to break the springs.

"How that wheel do wabble," said Molly at last.

She had scarcely spoken when the wheel came off, & all three were precipitated over it into the road. Fortunately the horse stood still, & they began to gather themselves up. The only one of the three who had suffered in the least from the fall was Anne, & she was only conscious of a severe shaking which had half-stupefied her for the time. The wheel lay flat in the road, so that there was no possibility of driving further in their present plight. They looked around for help. The only friendly object near was a lonely

cottage, (evidently from its situation) the home of a shepherd.

The horse was unharnessed & led to the back of the gig; & the three women went across to the ~~back of the~~ house. On getting close they found that the shutters of all the lower windows were closed, but on trying the door it opened to the hand. Nobody was within; the house appeared to have been abandoned in some confusion, & the probability was that the shepherd had flown on hearing the alarm. Anne now said that she felt the effects of her fall too severely to be able to go any further just then, & it was agreed that she should be left there while Miss Loveday & Molly went on for assistance, the elder lady deeming Molly too young & ~~vacant~~ absent-minded to be trusted to go alone. Molly suggested taking the horse as the distance might be great, each of them sitting alternately on his back while the other led him by the head. This they did, & Anne watching them vanish down the white & lumpy road.

She then looked round the room, as well as she could do so by the light from the open door. It was plain from the shutters being closed that the shepherd had left his house before daylight, the candle extinguished on the table pointing to the same conclusion. Here she remained, her eyes occasionally sweeping the bare sunny expanse of down, which was only relieved from absolute emptiness by the overturned gig hard by. The sheep seemed to have gone away, & scarcely a bird flew across to disturb the solitude. Anne had risen early that morning, & leaning back in the withy chair which she had placed by the door she soon fell into an uneasy doze, from which she was awakened by the distant tramp of a horse. Feeling much recovered from the effects of the overturn she eagerly rose & looked out. The horse was not Miller Loveday's, but a powerful bay, on whose back sat a man in full yeomanry uniform.

Anne did not wait to recognise further; instantly as entering the house she shut the door, & bolted it. ~~She~~ In the dark she sat & listened: not a sound. At the end of ten minutes, thinking that the rider, if he were not Hardy, had carelessly passed by, or that, if he were Hardy, he had not seen

her, she crept softly upstairs, & peeped out of the window. Except by the spot of shade formed by the gig as before, the down was quite bare. She then opened the casement, & stretched out her neck.

"Ha, young madam — you are caught! There you are! I knew ye! Now" came like a clap of thunder from a point three or four feet beneath her; & turning down her frightened eyes she beheld Festus Derriman lurking close to the wall. His attention had first been attracted by her shutting the door of the cottage; then by the overturned gig; & after making sure that he was not mistaken in her identity, by examining the vehicle, he had dismounted, led his horse round to the back, & crept up to entrap her.

Anne started back into the room & remained still as a stone. Festus went on: "Come, you must trust to me. The French have landed, I have been trying to meet with you every hour since that confounded trick you played me. You threw me into the water. Gad, it was well for you I didn't catch ye then! I should have taken a revenge in a better way than I shall now. I mean to have that kiss only — come, Miss Nancy, do you hear?.... 'Tis no use for you to lurk inside there. You'll have to turn out as soon as Boney comes over the hill.... Are you going to open the door, I say? & speak to me in a civil way?.. What do you think I am, then, that you shoved barricade yourself against me as if I was a wild beast or Frenchman. Open the door, or put out your head, or do something; or 'pon my soul I'll break in the door!

It occurred to Anne at this point of the tirade that the best policy would be to temporise till somebody should return; & she put out her head & face, now grown somewhat pale.

That's better, said Festus. Now I can talk to you. Come, my dear, will you open the door? Why should you be afraid of me?

"I am not altogether afraid of you; said Anne I am safe from the French here" said Anne, not very truthfully, & anxiously casting her eyes over the vacant down.

Then let me tell you that the alarm is false, & that no landing has been

attempted. Now will you open the door & let me in? I am tired. I have been on horseback ever since daylight, & have come to bring you the good tidings.

~~"I thought from your manner that they had not come," said Anne gladly. "Then let me in."~~

~~"No, I cannot let you in," said Lynne.~~ She murmured as a frame = Anne looked as if she doubted the news. "Come," said Lester. "No, I cannot let you in."

Dash my wig then," he cried, his face flaming up. "I'll find a way to get in! Now don't you provoke me! You don't know what I am capable of. I ask you again, will you open the door?

Why do you wish it? she said faintly

I've told you I want to sit down; & I want to ask you a question.

You can ask me from where you are.

I cannot ask you properly. It is about a serious matter. Whether you will accept my heart & hand. I am not going to throw myself at your feet; but I ask you to do your duty as a woman, namely, give your solemn word to take my name as soon as the war is over & I have time to attend to you. I scorn to ask it of a haughty hussy who will only speak to me through a window; however, but I put it to you for the last time, madam."

There was no sign on the down of anybody's return; & she said, "I'll think of it, sir".

"You have thought of it long enough; I want to know. Will you or won't you?

"Very well; I think I will." And then she felt that she might be buying personal safety too dearly by thus shuffling, since he would spread the report that she had accepted him, & cause endless complication. But she

"No," she said. "I have changed my mind. I cannot accept you, Mr Derriman.

"That's how you play with me!" he exclaimed stamping with one foot. 'Yes' one moment; "no" the next. Come, you don't know what you refuse. That old Hall is my uncle's own, & he has nobody else to leave it to. As soon as he's dead I shall throw up farming & start as a squire. By gad," he added with a bitter sneer; "what a fool you are to hang back from such a chance!

"Thank you. I don't value it". said Anne.

"Because you hate him who would make it yours?"

It may not be in your power to do that.

What – has the old fellow been telling you his ~~secret~~ affairs?

No.

Then why do you mistrust me? Now after this will you open the door, & show that you treat me as a friend if you wont accept me as a lover? I only want to sit & talk to you.

Anne thought she would trust him: it seemed almost impossible that he could harm her. She retired from the window & went downstairs. When her hand was upon the bolt of the door her mind misgave her. Instead of withdrawing it she remained in silence where she was; & he began again.

"Are you going to unfasten it?"

Anne did not speak

"Now, by heaven, I will get at you! You've tried me beyond endurance. One kiss would have been enough that day in the mead; now I'll give you twenty, if only to humiliate you, & show that I wont be thwarted!"

He flung himself against the door; but as it was ~~fastened~~ bolted & had in addition a great wooden bar across it, this produced no effect. He was silent for a moment, & then the terrified girl heard him attempt the ~~window~~ shutters. She ran upstairs & again scanned the down. The yellow gig still lay in the blazing sunshine, & the horse of Jezebel stood by the corner of the garden; nothing else was to be seen. At this moment there ~~was~~ came to her ear the noise of a sword drawn from its scabbard, & peeping over the window-sill she saw her tormentor drive his sword between the joints of the shutters, ~~as if~~ to in an attempt to rip them open. The sword snapped off in his hand. With an imprecation he pulled out the piece & returned the two halves to the scabbard.

"Ha-ha!" he cried, catching sight of the top of her head. "Tis only a joke, you know; but I'll get in all the same! All for a kiss; but never mind – we'll do it yet!" He spoke in an affected & light tone, as if ashamed of his previous resentful temper; but she could see by the ~~back~~ livid back of his neck that ~~in spite~~ he

was brimful of suppressed passion. "Only a jest, you know," he explained. How are we going to do it now? Why in this way – I go & get a ladder, & enter at the upper window where my love is. And there's the ladder lying under that corn-rick in the first enclosed field. Back in two minutes, dear!

He ran off, & was lost to her view.

End of part VIII.

~~"Oh good gad, you've come ... Home ... ~~

~~... Then ... ~~

Chapter XXVIII.

She gets a mount in the yeomanry cavalry.

~~Anne ... ~~ The upper windows of the cottage were of such flimsy lattice-work, & to keep him out would be hopeless. She felt that not a moment was to be lost in getting away. Running to the mountains she opened the door, & then it seemed to her that there would be no chance of escaping him by flight across such an extensive down, since he might mount his horse & easily ride after her. The animal still remained tethered at the corner of the garden; if she could release him, & freighten him away before Festus returned, there would not be quite such odds against her. She accordingly unhooked the horse by reaching over the bank, & then, pulling off her muslin neckerchief, flapped it in his eyes to startle him. But the gallant steed did not move or flinch; she tried again, & he seemed rather pleased than otherwise. At this moment she heard a cry from the cottage, & turning beheld her adversary approaching round the corner of the building. "I thought I should take out the mouse by that trick!" cried Festus, instead of going for a ladder he had simply hid himself at the back to tempt her down.

Poor Anne was now desperate. The bank on which she stood was level with the horse's back, & the creature seemed quiet as a lamb. With a determination of which she was capable in emergencies she seized the rein, flung herself upon the sheepskin, & held on by the mane. The amazed charger lifted his head, sniffed, wrenched his ears hither & thither, & started off at a frightful speed across the down.

"O my heart & limbs!" said Festus under his breath, as he gazed after her, thoroughly alarmed. "She on Champion!..... She'll break her neck; & I shall be tried for manslaughter, & disgrace will be brought upon the name of Derriman!"

Champion continued to go at a stretch-gallop; but he did nothing more.

Had he plunged or reared Derriman's fears might have been verified, & Anne have come with deadly force to the ground. But the course was good, & in the horse's speed lay a comparative security: She was scarcely shaken in her pre-carious half-horizontal position; though she was aware to see the grass & loose stones, & other objects pass her eyes like strokes whenever she opened them, which was only just for a second at intervals of half a minute; & how wildly the stirrups swung, & that what struck her feet was the boot of the carbine, & that it was a pistol-holster which hurt her arm.

They cleared the down, & Anne became conscious that the course of the horse was homeward. As soon as the ground began to rise towards the outer belt of upland which lay between her & the coast, Champion, now panting, & reeking with moisture, lessened his speed in sheer weariness, & proceeded at a rapid jolting trot. Anne felt that she could not hold on much longer: the gallop had been child's play compared with this. They were in a lane, ascending to a ridge; & she made up her mind for a fall. Over the ridge rose an animated spot, higher & higher; it turned out to be the upper part of a man; & the man to be a soldier. Such was Anne's attitude that she only got an occasional glimpse of him; &, though she feared that he might be a Frenchman, she feared the horse more than the enemy, as she had feared death more than the horse. Anne had energy enough left to cry "Stop him, stop him!" as the soldier drew near. He, astonished at the sight of a military horse with a bundle of drapery thrown across his back, had already placed himself in the middle of the lane, & he now held out his arms, his figure assuming the form of a Latin cross planted in the road-way. Champion drew near, & stood still almost suddenly, swerved. a check sufficient to send Anne slipping down his flank to the ground. The timely friend stepped forward & helped her to her feet, when she saw that he was John Loveday.

Interruption

Are you hurt? he said hastily, having turned quite pale at seeing her fall.

Oh no - not a bit, said Anne, gathering herself up with forced liveliness to make light of the misadventure.

But how did you get in such a place?

There - he's gone! she exclaimed instead of replying, as Champion swept round John Loveday & cantered off triumphantly in the direction of Overcombe, a performance which she followed with her eyes.

But how did you come upon his back, & whose horse is it?

I will tell you.

Well?

I cannot tell you.

John looked steadily at her, saying nothing. "How did you come here?" she asked. "Is it true that the French have not landed at all?"

Quite true; the alarm was groundless. I'll tell you all about it. You look very tired. You had better sit down a few minutes. Let us sit on this bank. He helped her to the slope indicated, & continued, still as if his thoughts were more occupied with the mystery of her recent situation than with what he was saying: "We arrived at Redipole Barracks this morning, & are to lie there all the summer. I could not write to tell father we were coming. It was not because of any rumour of the French, for we knew nothing of that till we met the people on the road; & the Colonel said in a moment the news was false. Buonaparte is not even at Boulogne just now. I was anxious to know how you had borne the fright. So I hastened to Overcombe at once, as soon as I could get out of Barracks."

Anne, who had not been at all responsive to this discourse, now sweetly leant heavily against him, & looking quickly down he found that she had silently fainted.

to support her in his arms was of course the impulse of a moment. There was no water to be had, & he could think of nothing else but to hold her tenderly till she came round again. Certainly he desired nothing more.

Again he asked himself, what did it all mean?

He waited, looking down upon her tired eyelids, & the rout of lashes lying upon each cheek, whose natural roundness showed itself in singular perfection now that the customary pinkness had given place to the pale luminousness caught from the surrounding atmosphere. The dumpy ringlets about her forehead & behind her poll, which were usually as tight as springs, had been partially uncoiled by the wildness of her ride, & hung in split locks over her forehead & neck. John, who during the long months of his absence, had lived only to meet her again, was in a state of ecstatic reverence; & bending down he gently kissed her.

Anne was just becoming conscious. "O Mr Derriman – never, never!" she murmured, sweeping her face with her hand.

"I thought he was at the bottom of it!" said John.

Anne opened her eyes, & started back from him. "What was it?" she said wildly.

"You are ill, my dear Miss Garland," replied John in a trembling anxiety, & taking her hand.

"I am not ill; I am wearied out," she said. "Can't we walk on? How far are we from Overcombe?"

"About a mile. But tell me – somebody has been hunting you – frightening you. I know who it was – It was Derriman – that was his horse. Now do you tell me all."

Anne reflected. "Then if I tell you," she said, "will you discuss with me what I had better do, & not for the present let my mother & your father know? I don't want to alarm them; and I must not let my affairs interrupt the business connection between the mill & the hall that has gone on for so many years."

The trumpet-major promised; & Anne told the adventure. His brow

reddened as she went on, & when she had done she said, 'Now you are angry.' 'Dont do anything dreadful, will you? Remember that this Festus will most likely succeed his Uncle at Overcombe, in spite of present appearances; & if Bob succeeds at the mill there should be no enmity between them.

'That's true. I wont tell Bob. Leave him to me. Where is Derriman now? - on his way home I suppose. When I have seen you into the house I will deal with him. Quite quietly. So that he shall say nothing about it.

'Yes - appeal to him, do! Perhaps he will be better than.

They walked on together, Loveday seeming to experience much quiet bliss. 'I came to look for you,' he said, 'because of that dear sweet letter you wrote.'

'Yes, I did write you a letter,' she admitted, with misgiving. 'I was beginning now beginning to see his mistake. 'It was because I was sorry I had blamed you.'

'I am almost glad you did blame me,' said John cheerfully. 'Since, if you had not, the letter would not have come. I have read it fifty times a day.

This put Anne into an unhappy mood & they proceeded without renewed further talk till the mill chimneys were visible below them. John then said that he would leave her to go in by herself.

'Ah - you are going back to get into some danger on my account!'

'I can't get into much danger with such a fellow as he, can I?' said John smiling.

'Well no,' she answered with a sudden carelessness of tone.

It was indispensable that he should be undeceived; & to begin the process by taking an affectedly light view of his personal risks was perhaps as good a way to do it as any. Where friendliness was translated as love, an assumed indifference was the necessary expression for friendliness.

So she let him go; & bidding him hasten back as soon as he could, went down the hill; while [illegible] of his feet retraced the upland.

The trumpet major spent the whole afternoon & evening in that long & difficult search for Festus Derriman. Crossing the down at the end of the second hour he met Molly & Mrs Loveday. The gig had been repaired, they had learnt the groundlessness of the alarm & they would have been proceeding happily enough but for their anxiety about Anne. John told them shortly that she had got a lift home, & proceeded on his way.

worthy object of his.
The ~~gentleman~~ search had in the meantime been plodding on foot, homeward, sulky at the loss of his charger, encumbered with his sword, belts, high boots, & uniform, & in his own discomfiture careless whether Anna Garland's life had been endangered or no.

At length Jerrimer reached a ~~forest~~ place where the road ran between high banks, one of which he mounted & placed along as a change from the hard trackway. Ahead of him he saw an old man sitting down, with his eyes fixed on the dust of the road, as if he rested & meditated at the same time. Being pretty sure that he recognised his uncle in that venerable figure Jerrimer came forward stealthily, till he was immediately above the old man's back. The latter was clothed in a coat which had once been light blue, but from exposure as a scarecrow had assumed the complexion of a dried pudding-cloth; faded nankeen breeches, speckled stockings, & a drab hat. The farmer was, in fact, returning to the Hall which he had left in the morning some time later than his nephew, to seek an asylum in a hollow tree about two miles off; the tree was so situated as to command a view of the building. Uncle Benjy had managed to clamber up inside this natural fortification high enough to watch his residence through a hole in the bark; till, gathering from the words of occasional passers by that the alarm was at least premature, he had ventured into daylight again.

He was now engaged in absently tracing a diagram in the dust with his walking-stick, & muttered words to himself aloud. Presently he arose, & went on his way without turning round. Jerrimer was curious enough to descend & look at the marks. They represented an oblong with two semi-diagonals, & a little square in the middle. Upon the diagonals were the figures 20 and 17, & on each side of the parallelogram stood a letter signifying the point of the compass.

"What crazy thing is running in his head now," said Jerrimer to himself with superstitious pity, recollecting that the farmer had been singing those very numbers earlier in the morning. Being able to make nothing of it he lengthened his strides, & heading on tiptoe overtook his relative, & saluted him by scratching on his back like a hen.

The startled old farmer danced round like a top, & gasping said as he pierced his nephew: What, Hesty? Not thrown from your horse & killed then, after all!

No, nunc. What made ye think that?

Champion passed me about an hour ago, when I was in hiding – poor timid soul of me, for I had nothing to lose by the French coming – and he looked awful with the stirrups dangling & the saddle empty. 'Tis a gloomy sight, Hesty, to see a horse cantering without a rider, & I thought you had been – feared you had been thrown off & killed as dead as a nit.

Bless your dear old heart for being so anxious! And what pretty picture were you drawing just now with your walking-stick?

Oh, that? That is only a way I have of amusing myself. It showed how the French might have advanced to the attack, you know. Such trifles fill the heart of a weak old man like me!

Or the place where something is hid away – money, for instance.

Hesty! said the farmer reproachfully, you always know I use the old glove in the bedroom cupboard for any guinea or two I possess.

Of course I do, said Hesters, ironically.

They had now reached a lonely inn about a mile & half from the Hall, & the farmer not responding to his nephew's kind invitation to come in & eat him, Hesters entered alone. He was dusty, draggled, & weary, & he remained at the tavern long. The trumpet-major, having in the meantime searched the roads in vain, heard in the course of the evening of the yeoman's arrival at this place, & that he would probably be found there still. He accordingly approached the door reaching it just as the dusk of evening changed to darkness.

~~a difficult search for Festus Derriman. At last he obtained information that the yeoman, in a dusty & draggled plight, had been seen to enter a lonely inn on the way, & would probably be found there still. Loveday reached the door of this tavern just as it got dark.~~ There was no light in the passage, but John pushed on at hazard, enquired for Derriman, & was told that he would be found in the back parlour alone. When Loveday first entered the apartment he was unable to see anything, but following the guidance of a vigorous snoring he came to the settle, upon which Festus lay asleep, his position being faintly signified by the shine of his buttons & other parts of his uniform. John laid his hand upon the reclining figure, & shook him; and by degrees Derriman stopped his snore, & sat up.

"Who are you?" he said in the accents of a man who has been drinking hard. "Is it you, dear Anne? – let me kiss you; yes I will."

"Shut your mouth, you pitiful blockhead! I'll teach you genteeler manners than to persecute a young woman in that way!" and taking Festus by the ear he gave it a good pull. Festus broke out with an oath, & struck a vague blow with his fist in the air; whereupon the trumpet-major dealt him a box on the right ear, & a similar one on the left to counterbalance the first. Festus jumped up & used his fists wildly, but without any definite result.

"Want to fight, do ye, eh?" said John. "Nonsense. You can't fight, you great baby, & never could. You are only fit to be smacked." and he dealt Festus a specimen of the same on the cheek with the palm of his hand.

"No sir, no! – Oh, you are Loveday, the young man she's going to be married to, I suppose? Dash me, I didn't want to hurt her, sir!

"Yes, my name is Loveday; & you'll know where to find me, since we can't finish this to-night. Pistols or swords – whichever you like, my boy. – Take that, & that. So that you may not forget to call upon me." And he smacked the yeoman's ears & cheeks again.

"Do you know what it is for – eh?

X adventure he had not the least notion: that Jesse Derriman misled by the darkness, ~~the fumes of~~ his potations, & the constant sight of Quinè & Bob Green ~~never once suspected~~ supposed his assailant to be any other man than Bob, believing the trumpet-major miles away.

No, Mr Loveday, sir – yes, I mean, I do!

What is it for then? I shall keep smacking until you tell me.

Gad, if you were'nt drunk I'd half kill you here-right!

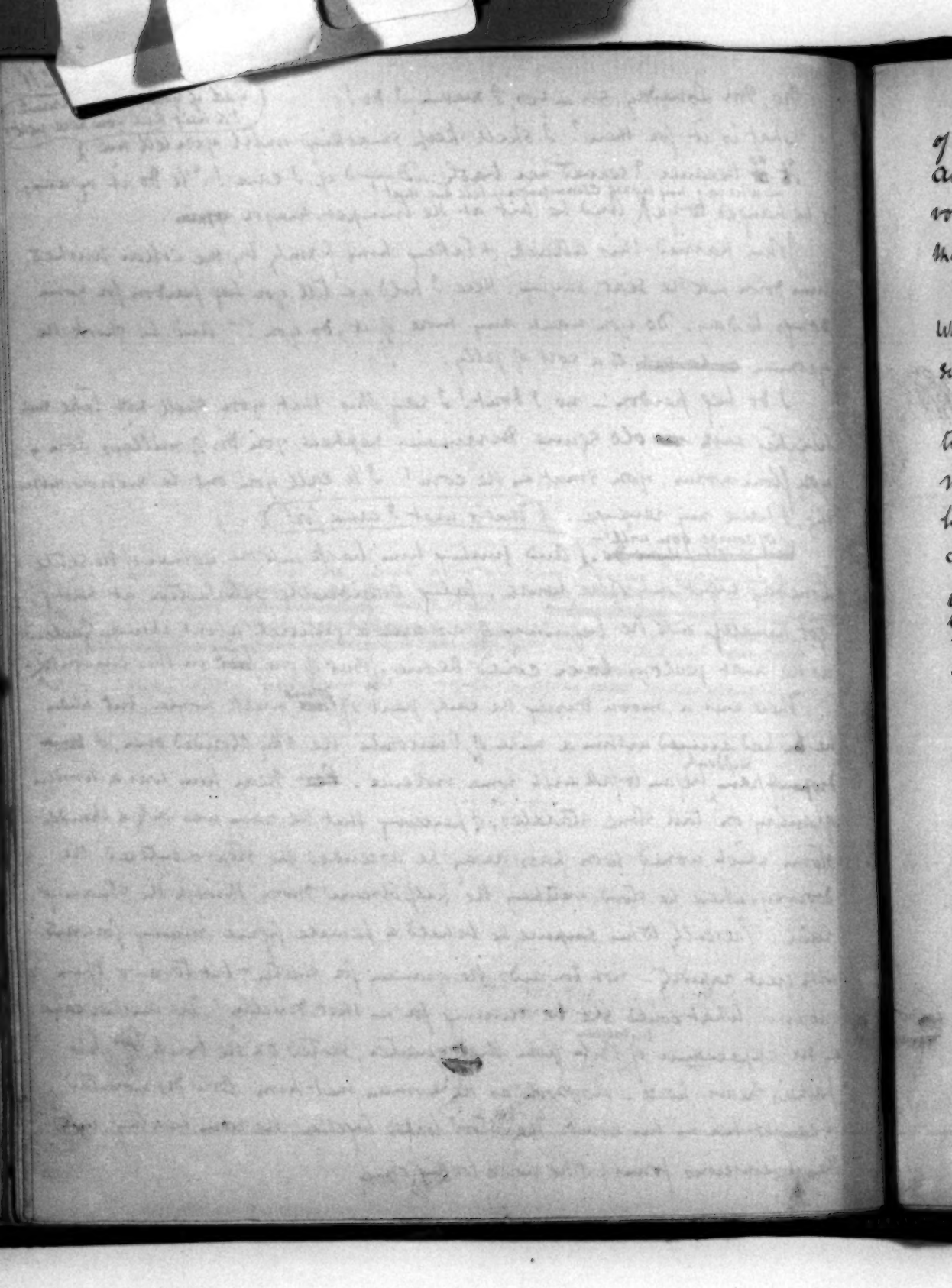
It is because I served her trash.... D—d if I care! I'll do it again, – where's my horse champion – let me at it! – & be hanged to ye! And he hit at the trumpet-major again.

John parried this attack, & taking him firmly by the collar pushed him down into the seat, saying: "Here I hold ye till you beg pardon for your doings to-day. Do you want any more of it, do you?" And he shook the yeoman to a sort of jelly.

I do beg pardon – no, I don't! I say this, that you shall not take such liberties with old Squire Derriman's nephew, you dirty miller's son & you flour-worm, you smut in the corn! I'll call you out to-morrow morning, & have my revenge. That's what I came for".

Of course you will – And pushing him back into the corner of the settle Loveday went out of the house, feeling considerable satisfaction at having got himself into the beginning of as nice a quarrel about Anne Garland as the most jealous lover could desire. But of one feature in this curious

There was a moon during the early part of John's walk home, but when he had arrived within a mile of Overcombe the sky clouded over, & suddenly rain began to fall with some violence. Near him was a wooden granary on tall stone staddles, & perceiving that the rain was only a thunder-storm which would soon pass away he ascended the steps & entered the doorway, where he stood watching the half-obscured moon through the streaming rain. Presently, to his surprise, he beheld a female figure running forward with great rapidity – not towards the granary for shelter, but towards open ground. What could she be running for in that direction? The answer came in the appearance of his brother Bob from that quarter, seated on the back of his father's heavy horse. As soon as the woman met him Bob dismounted, & caught her in his arms. They stood locked together, the rain beating into their unconscious forms; & the horse looking on.



The trumpet-major fell back inside the granary, & threw himself on a heap of empty sacks which lay in the corner: he had recognised the woman to be Anne. Here he reclined in a stupor till he was aroused by the sound of voices under him, the voices of Anne & his brother, who having at last discovered that they were getting wet had taken shelter under the granary floor.

"I have been home", said she. "Mother & Molly have both got back long ago. We were all anxious about you, & I came out to look for you. O Bob, I am so glad to see you again!"

John might have heard every word of the conversation, which was continued in the same strain for a long time; but he stopped his ears, & would not. Still they remained, & still was he determined that they should not see him. ~~that~~ With the conserved hope of more than half a year ~~stopped~~ dashed away in a moment he could yet feel ~~that the cruelty of a~~ that the cruelty of a protest would be even greater than its inutility. It ~~had been~~ was absolutely by his own connivance that the situation ~~had~~ ~~come about~~ had been shaped: ~~had~~ Bob, ~~been~~ left to himself, ~~he~~ would ~~have~~ long ere this have been the husband of another woman.

The rain decreased, & the lovers went on. John looked after them: Bob had thrust one of his arms through the rein of the horse, & the other was round Anne's waist. When they were lost behind the declivity the trumpet-major came out, & walked homeward even more slowly than they. As he went on his face ~~grew~~ ~~lost~~ put off its complexion of despair for one of ~~deep~~ serene resolve. For the first time in his dealings with friends he entered upon a course of counterfeiting, set his ~~face~~ features to conceal his thoughts, & instructed his tongue to do likewise. He threw fictitiousness into his very ~~walk~~ gait — even now, when there was nobody to see him, & struck at stems of wild parsley ~~as he had done~~ with his regimental switch as he had used to do when soldiering was new to him, & life in general a charming experience.

Thus cleansing his sickly thought he descended to the mill as the others had done before him, occasionally looking down upon the wet road to notice

how close Anne's little tracks were to Bob's all the way along, & how precisely a curve in his course was followed by a curve in hers. But after this he erected his head, & he walked so smartly up to the front door that his spurs rang through the court.

They had all reached home, but before any of them could speak he cried gaily: Ah Bob, I have been thinking of you! By gad, how are you, my boy? No French cut-throats after all, you see. Here we are, well & happy together again.

"A good providence has watched over us." said Mrs Loveday cheerfully. "Yes, in all times & places we are in God's hand.

"So we be, so we be!" said the miller, who still shone in all the freshness of uniform. "Well, now we'll have a drop o' drink".

"There's none", said David, coming forward with a drawn face.

What? said the miller.

Afore I went to climb for a pike to defend my country from Boney, I pulled out the spigots of all the barrels, for thinks I, Hang him, since we can't drink it ourselves he shan't have it, stingy Boney, nor none of his men!

But you shouldn't have done it till you was sure he'd come! said the miller aghast.

"Chok'it all, I was sure!" said David. "I'd sooner see churches fall than good drink wasted; but how was I to know better?"

"Well, well: what with one thing & another this day will cost me a pretty penny!" said Loveday bustling off to the cellar, which he found to be several inches deep in stagnant liquor. "John how can I welcome ye!" he continued hopelessly on his return to the room. "Only go & see what he's done!"

I've ladled up a drap wi' a trumpet-major's spoon, said David. 'Tis not bad drinking; though it do taste a little of the floor, that's true.

John said that he did not require anything at all; & then they all sat down to supper & were very temperately gay with a drop of mild elder-wine which Mrs L. found in a hole. The trumpet-major, delighting to the part he meant to play, gave humorous accounts of his adventures since he last sat here. He told them that the season was to be a very lively one, that the Royal Family was coming as usual.

& many other interesting things: so that when he left them to return to Radipole few would have supposed the British army to contain a lighter-hearted man.

Anne was the only one who doubted the reality of this behaviour. When she had gone up to her bedroom she stood for some time looking at the wick of the candle as if it were a painful object; the expression of her face being shaped by the conviction that Johns words afterwards when he helped her out of the way of Champion were not in accordance with his words to-night, & that he dimly recognized during her faintness was no imaginary one. But in the blissful encumbrance of having Bob at hand again she took optimist views, & persuaded herself that John would soon begin to see her in the light of a sister.

Chapter XXIX. – A dissembler.

~~[illegible]~~.

To cursory view John Loveday seemed to have accomplished this with amazing ease. Whenever he came from barracks to Overcombe, which was once or twice a week, he related to her & Bob, news of all sorts, with infinite zest, & made the time as happy a one as had ever been known at the mill, save for himself. He said nothing of desires, except so far as to inform Anne that he had expected to see her & been disappointed alone. On the evening after the Kings arrival at Weymouth John appeared again, staying to supper, & describing the royal entry, & the many tasteful illuminations & transparencies which had been exhibited, the quantities of tallow candles burnt for that purpose, & the swarms of aristocracy who had followed the king thither.

When supper was over Bob went outside the house to shut the shutters, which had, as was often the case, been left open some time after lights were kindled within. John still sat at the table when his brother approached the window, though the others had risen & retired; & Bob was at once struck by seeing how his face had changed. (He had been talking to Anne throughout the supper-time in the gay tone habitual with him now, which gave greater sharpness to the gloom of his present appearance. He remained in thought for a moment, took a letter from his breast-pocket, opened

it, & with a tender smile at his meekness kissed the writing before restoring it to its place. The letter was the one that Anne had written to him at Exeter.

Bob stood perplexed; & then a suspicion crossed his mind that John, from brotherly goodness, might be forcing a satisfaction with recent events which he did not feel. Bob now made a noise with the shutters, at which the trumpet-major rose & went out, Bob at once following him.

"Jack," the sailor said ingenuously, "I'm terribly sorry that I've done wrong! I'm courting our little Anne. ~~[illegible]~~ Well, you see John, she was in the same house with me, & somehow or other I made myself her beau. But I have been thinking that perhaps you had the first claim on her, & if so, Jack, I'll make way for ye.... I – I don't care about her much, you know – not so very much, & can give her up very well. It is nothing serious between us at all. yes, John, you try to get her; I can look elsewhere." Bob never knew how much he loved Anne till he found himself making this speech of renunciation.

"Oh, Bob, you are mistaken" said the trumpet-major, who was not deceived. "When I first saw her I admired her, & I admire her now, & like her –

[At this minute Mrs Loveday & the miller strolled round near to the point where the brothers stood. who were taking a twilight walk in the garden & talked She talked volubly on the events in Weymouth, as most people did at this time. "And they tell me that the theatre has been painted up a fresh," she was saying, "and that the actors have come for the season, with the most lovely actresses that ever were seen."

No. ~~"Then they had passed by John continued; "As I said I like her & always~~ shall like I like her so well that I shall be glad to see you marry her.

"But," replied Bob, with hesitation ~~jumping at the hope that he was wrong after all~~, "I thought I saw you looking very sad, as if you were in love; I saw you take out a letter, in short. That's what it was disturbed me & make me come to you."

"Oh, I see your mistake," said John laughing. ~~I am in love Bob; but~~

*[When they had passed by John continued; "I am in love Bob; but – not with Anne."

Ah – who is it, then? said the mate, hopefully.

John replied, with a consecutive look at the vanishing forms of Mr & Mrs Loveday.

One of the actresses at the theatre. She is a very lonely woman, you know. But we won't say anything more about it — it dashes a man so."

"Oh — one of the actresses!" said Bob, with open mouth.

"But don't you say anything about it," continued the trumpet-major hastily. "I don't want it known."

"No, no — I won't, of course. May I not know her name?

"No — not now, Bob. I cannot tell ye", John answered, & with great truth, for Loveday did not know the name of any one actress in the world.

When his brother had gone Captain Bob hastened off to Anne in a state of great animation to Anne, whom he found on the top of a neighbouring hillock which the daylight had scarcely as yet deserted.

"You have been a long time coming, Sir!" said she in sprightly tones of reproach.

"Yes, dearest; & you'll be glad to hear why. I've found out the whole mystery — yes — why he's queer, & everything!"

Anne looked startled.

"He's up to the gunnel in love! We must try to help him on in it, or I fear he'll go melancholy-mad like."

"We help him?" she asked faintly.

"He's lost his heart to one of the play-actresses at Weymouth; & I think she slights him!"

O I am so glad! she exclaimed.

Glad that his venture don't prosper?

O no — glad he's so sensible. How long is it since that alarm of the French?

Six weeks, honey. Why do you ask?

"Men can forget in six weeks, can't they, Bob?" The impression that John had really kissed her still remained.

Well, some men might, observed Bob judicially. "I cou'dn't. Perhaps John might. I cou'dn't forget you in twenty times as long. Do you know Anne, I half thought it was you John cared about; & it was a weight off

my heart when he said he didn't.

Did he say he didn't?

Yes. He assured me himself that the only person in the world of his heart was this lovely actress, & nobody else.

How I should like to see her!

Yes. So should I.

I would rather it had been one of our own neighbours' girls, whose birth & breeding we know of; but still, if that is his taste, I hope it will end well for him. How very quick he has been! I certainly wish we could see her.

I don't know so much as her name. He is very close, & wouldn't tell a thing about her.

Could not we get him to go to the theatre with us; & then we could watch him, & easily find out the right one? Then we would learn if she is a good young woman; & if she is could we not ask her here, & so make it smoother for him? He has been very gay lately; that means budding love: & sometimes between his gaieties he has had melancholy moments; that means that there's difficulty.

Bob thought her plan a good one, & resolved to put it in practice on the first available evening. Anne was very anxious as to whether John did really cherish a new passion, the story having quite surprised her. Possibly it was true; for six weeks had passed since John had shown a single symptom of the old attachment, & what could not that space of time effect in the heart of a soldier whose very profession it was to leave girls behind him?

After this John Loveday did not come to see them for nearly ten days, a neglect which was set down by Bob as an additional proof that his brother's affections were no longer exclusively centered in his old home. When at last he did arrive, & the theatre-going scheme was mentioned to him, the flush of consciousness which Anne expected to see upon his face was unaccountably absent.

Yes, Bob: I should very well like to go to the theatre, he replied heartily. Who is going besides?

"Only Anne", Bob told him; & then it seemed to occur to the trumpet-major that

something had been expected of him. He rose & said privately to Bob with some confusion, Oyes, of course we'll go. as I am connected with one of the— in short I can get you in for nothing you know. At least let me manage everything? ~~We must go on a king's night & there will be a crowd.~~"

Yes, yes. I wonder you didn't propose to take us before, Jack; & let us have a good look at her?" ~~being now connected with the stage.~~

I ought to have. You shall go on a King's night.... ~~But~~ You won't want me to point her out, Bob? — I have my reasons at present for asking it?

"We'll be content with guessing," said his brother.

When the gallant John was gone Anne observed, "Bob, how he is changed! I watched him. He showed no feeling, even when you burst upon him suddenly with the subject nearest his heart.

"It must be because his suit don't flag," said Captain Bob.

Chapter XXX. At the Theatre Royal.

In two or three days a message arrived asking ~~came for~~ them to attend at the Theatre on the coming evening, with the added request that they would dress in their gayest clothes, to do justice to the places taken. Accordingly, & in the course of the afternoon they drove off, Bob having clothed himself in a splendid suit, recently purchased as an attempt to bring himself nearer to Anne's ~~out of compliment to her in such company~~ style of dress when they appeared in public together. As by this dashing & really fashionable attire finished off, he was the perfection of a beau in the dog-days; pantaloons & boots of the newest make; yards of muslin wound round his neck; forming a sort of asylum for the lower part of his face; & two fancy waistcoats, & coat-buttons like circular shading glasses. The utmost extreme of female fashion, which was to wear muslin dresses in January, was at this time equalled by that of the men, who wore clothes enough in August to melt them. Nobody would have guessed from Bob's presentation now that he had ever been cloyed on a dark night in the Atlantic, or knew the hundred ingenuities that could be performed with a ropes end & a marling spike as well as his mother tongue.

It was a day of days. Anne wore her celebrated celestial blue pelisse, & her Leghorn hat & her muslin dress with the waist under the armpits. The latter being decorated with excellent Honiton lace bought of the amiable woman who travelled from to Overcombe & its neighbourhood that place with a basketful of her own manufacture, & a cushion on which

she worked by the wayside. John met them at the Radipole Inn, & after stabling the horse they entered the town together, the trumpet-major informing them that Weymouth had never been so full before, that the Duke of Wales, the Count, & every body of consequence was there, & that an attic could scarcely be got for money. The king had gone for a cruise in his yacht, & they would be in time to see him land.

Then drums & fifes were heard, & in a minute or two they saw Sergeant Stanner with a firm countenance, fiery poll, & rigid staring eyes advancing along the street in front of his recruiting-party. The sergeant's sword was drawn, & at intervals of two or three inches along its shining blade were impaled, fluttering one-pound notes, to express the lavish bounty that was offered. He gave a suppressed nod to all people, opened by. Next they came up to a waggon, bowered over with leaves & flowers, so that the men inside could hardly be seen.

"Come to see the King, Hip-hip-hurrah!" cried a voice, & turning they saw through the leaves the rosy & face of Cripplestraw. The waggon contained all Derriman's workpeople.

"Is your master here?" said John.

"No, Trumpet-major, sir. But young maister is coming to fetch us at nine o'clock, in case we should be too blind to drive home."

"Oh – where is he now?"

"Never mind", said Anne impatiently; ~~and she frowned~~ at which the trumpet-major obediently moved on.

By the time they reached the pier it was six o'clock; the royal yacht was returning; a fact announced by the ships in the harbour firing a salute. The king came ashore with his hat in his hand, & returned the salutations of the well dressed crowd ~~again~~ in his old indiscriminate fashion. While this cheering & waving of handkerchiefs was going on Anne stood between the two brothers, who protectingly joined their hands behind her back, as if she were a delicate piece of statuary ~~that a push while this engaging scene of handshaking was going on might damage~~. Soon the king had passed, and receiving the military salutes of the piquet & joined the Queen & Princesses at Gloucester Lodge, the homely house of red brick in which he ~~resided~~ unostentatiously resided.

As there was yet some little time before the theatre would open they strayed upon the velvet sands, ~~running~~ & listened to the songs of the sailors, one of whom

extemporized for the occasion:

Portland Road the King aboard, the King aboard!
~~[illegible]~~,
Portland Road the King aboard.
~~[illegible]~~
We weighed and sailed from Portland Road!
~~[illegible]~~,
~~[illegible]~~!

When they had looked on awhile at the combats at single-stick which were in progress hard by, & seen the sum of five guineas handed over to the modest gentleman who had broken most heads, they returned to Gloucester Lodge, whence the King & other members of his ~~[illegible]~~ family now reappeared, & drove at a slow trot, ~~[illegible]~~, round to the theatre in carriages drawn by the ~~[illegible]~~ Hanoverian white horses that were so well known in Weymouth at this date.

When Anne & Bob ~~had~~ entered the theatre they found that John had taken excellent places, ~~for them~~, & concluded that he had got them for nothing, through the influence of the lady of his choice, ~~though~~ As a matter of fact he had paid ~~[illegible]~~ full prices for those two seats, like any other ~~[illegible]~~ outsider. When they were settled he himself retired to an obscure part of the pit, ~~[illegible]~~ from which the stage was scarcely visible. (Even then he had difficulty in getting them, it being a King's night.)

"We can see beautifully", said Bob, in an ~~[illegible]~~ aristocratic voice, as he took a delicate pinch of snuff, & drew out the magnificent pocket-handkerchief brought home from the East for such occasions. "But I am afraid poor John can't see at all."

"But we can see him," replied Anne, & notice by his face which of them it is he is so ~~[illegible]~~ charmed with. "The light of that corner candle falls right upon his ~~[illegible]~~ cheek."

By this time the King had appeared in his place, which was overhung by a canopy of crimson satin fringed with gold. About twenty places were occupied by the royal family & suite; & beyond them was a crowd of powdered & glittering personages of fashion, completely filling the centre of the little building; though the King so frequently patronized the local stage during these years that the crush was not inconvenient. ~~[illegible]~~.

The ~~[illegible]~~ curtain rose & the play began. To- ~~[illegible]~~ night it was one of Colman's, who at this time enjoyed great popularity. ~~[illegible]~~ Mr Bannister supported the leading character, ~~[illegible]~~ Mr Bannister supporting the character of the Doctor.

Anne, with her hand privately clasped in Bob's, & looking as if she did not know it, partly watched the faces & partly the backs of the impressionable John who had so soon transferred his affections elsewhere. She had not long to wait. When a certain one of the subordinate ladies of the ~~piece entered~~ comedy ~~who played the part of the comic page~~ entered on the stage the trumpet-major in his corner not only looked conscious, but started & gazed with parted lips.

"This must be the one," whispered Anne quickly. See, he is agitated!"

She turned to Bob, but at the same moment his hand convulsively closed upon hers as he fixed his eyes too strangely upon the newly-entered lady.

"What is it?" Anne looked from one to the other without regarding the stage at all. Her answer came in the voice of the actress who now spoke for the first time. The accents were those of Miss Matilda Johnson.

One thought rushed into both their minds on the instant, & Bob was the first to utter it. "What — is she the woman of his choice after all?"

"If so, it is a dreadful thing!" murmured Anne.

But as may be imagined, the unfortunate John was as much surprised by this rencounter as the other two. Until this moment he had been in utter ignorance of the theatrical company & all that pertained to it. Moreover, much as he knew of Miss Johnson, he was not aware that she had ever been trained in her youth as an actress, & that after lapsing into straits & difficulties for a couple of years she had been so fortunate as to again procure an engagement here.

The trumpet-major, though not prominently seated, had been seen by Matilda already, who had shewn herself still more plainly her old betrothed & Anne in the other part of the house. John was not concerned on his own account at being face to face with her, but at the extraordinary suspicion that this confrontation must revive in the minds of his best beloved friends. After some moments of strained reflection he tapped his knee.

Gad, I won't explain; it shall go as it is! he said. Let them think her mine. Better that than the truth, after all.

Had personal prominence in the scene been at this moment proportioned to intenseness of feeling, the whole audience, regal & theatric, would have faded into an indistinct mist of background, leaving as sole emergent & telling figures Bob & Anne at one point, the trumpet-major on the left hand, & Matilda at the opposite corner of the stage. But fortunately the dead-lock of awkward suspense into which all form had fallen was terminated by an accident. A messenger entered the King's box with despatches. There was an instant pause in the performance. The despatch-box being opened the king read for a few moments with great interest, the eyes of the whole house, including those of Anne Garland, being anxiously fixed upon his face; for terrible events fell as unexpectedly as thunderbolts at this critical time of our history. The king at length whispered to Lord —— who was immediately behind him, the play was again stopped, & the contents of the despatch were publicly communicated to the audience: The news was received with truly national feeling, if worse might be taken as an index of patriotism. "Rule Britannia" was called for & sung by the whole house. [Sir Robert Calder, cruising off Finisterre, had come in sight of Villeneuve & his fleet, made the signal for action, which though checked & long hindered by the weather, had resulted in the capture of two Spanish ships of the line, & the retreat of Villeneuve into Ferrol.] But the importance of the event was far from being recognized at this time; & Bob Loveday, as he sat there & heard it had very little conception how it would bear upon his destiny.

This parenthetic excitement diverted for a few minutes the eyes of Bob & Anne from the trumpet-major; & when the play proceeded, & they looked back to his corner, he was gone.

"He's just slipped round to talk to her behind the scenes," said Bob knowingly. Shall we go too, & leave him for a sly dog?

No, I would rather not. [Shall we go home, then? [Not unless her presence is too much for you? [Gad - not at all, We'll stay here. Ah, there she is again.

They sat on, & listened to Matilda's speeches, which she delivered with such

* It turned towards the pier. Reaching the end of the promenade they surveyed the quivering waters in silence for some time, until a long dark line shot from behind the promontory of the Nothe & swept ~~forward~~ into the harbour.

"What boat is that?" said Anne

"It seems to be from some frigate lying in the Roads," said Bob, carelessly, as he brought Anne round with a gentle pressure of his arm & bent his steps towards the homeward end of the town.

delightful coolness that they soon began to interest one of the party (considerably).
"Well, what a nerve the young woman has!" he said at last in tones of admiration, & gazing at Miss Johnson with all his might. After all, Jack's taste is not so bad. She's really devilish clever."

"Bob, I'll go home if you wish to." said Anne quietly.

No – let us see how she fleets herself off that bit of a scrape she's playing at now. Well, what a hand she is at it, to be sure!

Anne said no more but waited on, supremely uncomfortable, & almost tearful. She began to feel that she did not like life particularly well, it was too complicated: she saw nothing of the scene, & only longed to get away, & to get Bob away with her. At last the curtain fell on the final act, & then began the farce of "No song no supper". Matilda did not appear in this piece, & Anne again inquired if they should go home. This time Bob agreed, & taking her under his care with redoubled affection, to make up for the species of coma which had seized upon his heart for a time, ~~they~~ he quietly accompanied her out of the house. ~~On to the~~ [When they emerged upon ~~they emerged upon~~ the esplanade, the moon was shining across the sea from the direction of St Albans Head. Bob unconsciously loitered.

Meanwhile Miss Johnson, having finished her duties for that evening, rapidly changed her dress, & went out likewise. ~~Having seen~~ The prominent position ~~for persons in their station~~ which Anne & Captain Bob had occupied side by side in the theatre left her no alternative but to suppose that the situation was arranged by Bob as a species of defiance ~~by Bob~~ to herself; & her heart, such as it was, became proportionately more embittered against him. In spite of the rise in her fortunes Miss Johnson still remembered ~~the~~ – & always would remember – her humiliating departure from Overcombe; & it had even been to her a more grievous thing that Bob had acquiesced in his brother's ruling than that John had determined it. At the time of setting out she was sustained by a ~~certainty~~ firm faith that Bob would follow her, & nullify his brother's scheme; but though she waited Bob ~~did not~~ never came.

She passed along by the houses facing the sea, & scanned the shore ~~Esplanade~~ ahead,

the footway, & the open road close to her, which, illuminated by the slanting moon to a great brightness, sparkled with minute facets of crystallized salts that had been from the water sprinkled there during the day. The promenaders at the further edge appeared in dark profiles; & beyond them was the grey sea, parted into two masses by the tapering braid of moonlight ~~in their midst~~ across the waves.

Two forms crossed this line at a startling nearness to her; whom she ~~at~~ marked them at once as Anne & Bob Loveday. They were walking slowly, & in the earnestness of their discourse were oblivious of the presence of any human being save themselves. Matilda stood motionless till they had passed. ["How I love them!" she said, treading the initial step of her walk onwards with a vehemence that walking did not demand.

So do I – especially one, said a voice at her elbow; & a man wheeled round her & looked in her face, which had been fully exposed to the moon.

You – who are you? she asked.

Don't you remember, ma'am? We walked some way together towards Overcombe earlier in the summer." Matilda looked more closely, & perceived that the speaker was Derriman. He continued. You are one of the ladies of the theatre, I know. May I ask why you said in such a queer way that you loved that couple?"

In a queer way?

Well, as if you hated them?

I don't mind your knowing that I have good reason to hate them. ~~I shall be sorry to part them~~. You do ~~it~~ too, it seems?

That man, said Hestus savagely, came to me one night about that very woman; insulted me before I could put myself on my guard, & ran away before I could come up with him & avenge myself. The woman tricks me at every turn. I want to part them.

Then why don't you? Here's a splendid opportunity. Do you see that Soldier walking along? He's a marine; he looks into the gallery of the theatre every night; & he's in connection with the press gang that

came ashore just now from the frigate ~~Hecate~~ lying in Portland Roads. They are often here for men. I yes. Our boatmen dread them." [Well. P.A. We have only to tell him that Loveday is a seaman to be clear of him this very night.

"Done", said Festus. "Take my arm & come this way." They walked across to the footway.

Fine night, sergeant.

It is, Sir.

Looking for hands, I suppose?

It is not to be known Sir. We don't begin till half-past ten.

It is a pity you don't begin now. I could show ye excellent game.

What, that little nest of fellows at the Three Tuns? I have just heard of 'em.

"No – come here".

Festus with Miss Johnson on his arm led the sergeant quickly along the parade, & by the time they reached the Narrows the lovers, who walked but slowly, were visible in front of them. "There's your man" he said

That buck in pantaloons & half-boots – a looks like a squire?

Twelvemonths ago he was mate of the brig Perit; but his father has made money, & keeps him at home.

Faith, now you tell of it, there's a hint of sea legs about him. What's the young beau's name?

Don't tell! whispered Matilda, impulsively clutching Festus's arm.

But Festus had already said "Robert Loveday, son of the miller at Overcombe. You may find several likely fellows in that neighbourhood."

The marine said that he would bear it in mind, & they left him.

["I wish you had not told", said Matilda. "She's the worst."

Dash my eyes now; listen to that! Why, you chicken-hearted old stager, you was as well agreed as I. Come now; has nit he used you badly?

Matilda's acrimony returned. "I was down on my luck, or he wouldn't have had the chance" she said.

"Well then, let things be."

End of Part IX.

The Trumpet-Major.

Chapter XXXI
Midnight Visitors.

Miss Garland & Loveday walked leisurely to the inn & called for the horse & gig. While the hostler was bringing it round the landlord, who knew Bob & his family well, spoke to him quietly in the passage.

"Is this then because you want to throw dust in the eyes of the Black Diamond chaps?" (with an admiring glance at Bob's costume)

The Black Diamond? said Bob; & Anne turned pale.

She has escaped into Cove in sight just at dark, & at nine o'clock a boat having with more than a dozen marines on board, with cloaks & on, rowed into Lantom.

Bob reflected. "Then there'll be a press to night; depend upon't" he said.

"They won't know you, will they Bob?" said Anne anxiously.

"They certainly won't know him for a seaman now" remarked the landlord laughing, & again surveying Bob up & down. "But if I was you two, I should drive home along straight & quiet; & be very busy in the mill all to-morrow, Mr Loveday.

They drove away; & when they had got a little way out of the town Anne strained her eyes anxiously towards Portland. Its dark contour, lying like a whale on the sea, was just perceptible in the gloom, as the background to half-a-dozen ships' lights nearer at hand.

They can't make you go, now they you are a miller, can they? she asked.

If they want me they can have me, dearest. I have often said I ought to volunteer.

And not care about me at all?

It is just that that keeps me at home. I won't leave you if I can help it.

It cannot make such a vast difference to the country whether one man goes or stays! But if you want to go you had better, & not mind us at all!

Bob put a period to her speech with that by a mark of affection to which history affords many parallels in every age. She said no more about the Black Diamond; but whenever they ascended a hill she turned her head to look at the lights in Portland Roads, & the grey expanse of intervening sea.

Though Captain Bob had stated that he did not wish to volunteer, & would

not leave her if he could help it, the remark required some qualification. That Anne was charming & loving enough to chain him anywhere was true; but he had begun to find the mill-work terribly irksome at times. Often during the last month, when standing among the rumbling wheels in his new miller's suit which ill became him, he had yawned, thought wistfully of the old pea-jacket, & the waters of the deep blue sea. His dread of displeasing his father by showing anything of this change of sentiment was great; yet he might have braved it but for knowing that his marriage with Anne, which he hoped might take place the next year, was dependent entirely upon his adherence to the mill. Even were his father indifferent, Mrs Loveday would never entrust her only daughter to the hands of a husband who would be away from home five-sixths of his time.

But though apart from Anne, he was not averse to seafaring in itself, to be smuggled thither by the machinery of a press-gang was intolerable; & the process of being pinioned, & carrying off unwilling hands was one which Bob as a man had always determined to hold out against to the utmost of his power. Hence as they went towards home he frequently listened for sounds behind him, but hearing none he assumed his sweetheart that they were safe for that night at least. The mill was still going when they arrived, though Miller Loveday was not to be seen; he had retired as soon as he heard the horses' hoofs in the lane, leaving Bob to watch the grinding till three o'clock; when the elder would rise, & Bob withdraw to bed — a frequent arrangement between them since Bob had taken the place of grinder.

Having reached the privacy of her own room Anne threw open the window, for she had not the slightest intention of going to bed just yet. The tale of the Black Diamond had disturbed her by a slow insidious process that was worse than sudden fright. Her window looked into the court before the house, now wrapped in shadow of the trees & the hill; & she leaned upon its sill listening intently. She could have heard any strange sound distinctly enough in one direction; but in the other all low noises were absorbed in the patter of the mill, & the rush of water down the race.

However, what she heard came from the hitherto silent side, & was intelligible

in a moment as being the footsteps of men. She tried to think they were some late stragglers from Weymouth or Melcombe, no: the tramp was too regular for that of villagers. She hastily turned, extinguished the candle, & listened again. As they were on the main road there was, after all, every probability that the party would pass the bridge which gave access to the mill court without turning in upon it, or even nothing that such an entrance existed. In this again she was disappointed: they crossed into the front without a pause. The pulsations of her heart became a turmoil now, for why should these men, if they were the passengers & strangers to the locality, have supposed that a sailor was to be found here, the younger of the two millers Loveday being never seen now in any garb which could suggest that he was other than a miller pure, like his father. One of the men spoke.

"I am not sure that we are in the right place", he said

"This is a mill anyhow", said another.

"There's lots about here.

Then come this way a moment with your light.

Two of the group went towards the cart-house on the opposite side of the yard, & when they reached it a dark lantern was opened, & the rays being directed upon the front-board of the miller's waggon.

"'Loveday & Son: Overcombe Mill'," so continued the man, reading from the waggon. "'Son' you see, is lately painted in. That's our man.

He moved to turn off the light, but before he had done so it flashed over the forms of the speakers, & revealed a sergeant, a naval lieutenant officer, & a file of marines.

Anne waited to see no more. When Bob stayed up to grind, as he was doing to-night, he often sat in his room instead of remaining all the time in the mill; & this room was an isolated chamber over the bakehouse, which could not be reached without going downstairs & ascending the step ladder that served for his staircase. Anne descended in the dark, clambered up the ladder, & saw that light strayed through the

chink below the door. His window faced towards the garden, & hence the light could not as yet have been seen by the press-gang.

"Bob – dear Bob!" she said through the keyhole. "Put out your light, & run out of the back door!"

Why? said Bob, leisurely knocking the ashes from the pipe he had been smoking, & coming to the door.

"The press-gang!"

They have come? By gad: who can have blown upon me? All right dearest! I'm game."

Anne, scarcely knowing what she did, descended the ladder & ran to the back door, hastily unbolting it to save Bob's time, & gently opening it in readiness for him. She had no sooner done this than she felt hands laid upon her shoulders from without, & a voice exclaiming, "That's how we does it – quite an obleeging young man!"

Though the hands held her rather roughly Anne did not mind for herself, & turning she cried desperately in tones intended to reach Bob's ear: "They are at the back door: try the front!

But misfortune ~~would~~ Miss Garland little knew the shrewd habits of the gentlemen she had to deal with, who, well used to this sort of pastime, had already posted themselves at every outlet from the premises. "Bring your lantern," shouted the fellow who held her. "Why – 'tis a girl! I half thought so – there is a way in, he continued to his comrades, hastening to the foot of the ladder which led to Bob's room.

What d'ye want? said Bob, quietly opening the door, & showing himself still radiant in the full dress that he had worn with such effect at Weymouth, which he had been about to change for his mill-suit when Anne gave the alarm.

"This gentleman can't be the right one," observed a marine, rather impressed by Bob's appearance

"Yes, yes: that's the man," said the sergeant. Now take it quietly, my young

cock
knock o' wax. You look as if you meant to, & 'tis wise of ye.

Where are you going to take me? said Bob.

Only aboard the Black Diamond. If you choose to take the bounty, & come voluntary, you'll be allowed to go ashore whenever your ship's in port. If you don't, & we've got to pinion ye, you will not have your liberty at all. As you must come, willy-nilly, you'll do the first if you've any brains at all.

Bob's temper began to rise. Don't you talk so cock-sure about your pinioning, my man. When I've settled —

"Now or never, young blow-hard," interrupted his informant, soothingly.

"Come, what jabber is this going on?" said the lieutenant, stepping forward. "Bring your man."

One of the marines set foot on the ladder; but at the same moment a shot from Bob's hand hit the lantern, with well-aimed direction, & knocked it clean out of the grasp of the man who held it. In spite of the darkness they began to scramble up the ladder. Bob thereupon shut the door, which being but of slight construction was as he knew only a momentary defence. But it gained him time enough to open the window, gather up his legs upon the sill, & spring across into the appletree growing without. He alighted without much hurt beyond a few scratches from the boughs, a shower of falling apples testifying to the force of his leap.

"Here he is!" shouted several below, who had seen Bob's figure flying like a raven across the sky.

There was stillness for a moment in the tree. Then the figure made haste to climb out upon a low-hanging branch towards the garden; at which to catch him as he dropped, the men beneath all rushed in that direction, saying, You may as well come down, old boy. 'Twas a spry jump; & we give ye credit for't.

The latter movement of Loveday had been a mere feint. Partly hidden by the leaves he glided back to the other part of the tree, from whence it was easy to jump upon a thatch-covered outhouse. This latter movement they did not appear to see, which gave him the opportunity of sliding

down the slope, & entering the back-door of the mill.

"He's here, he's here!" the men exclaimed running back from the tree.

By this time they had obtained another light, & pursued him closely along the ~~passage~~ back quarters of the mill. Bob had entered the lower room, seized hold of the chain by which the flour-sacks were hoisted from story to story by connection with the mill-wheel, & pulled the rope that hung alongside for the purpose of throwing it into gear. The foremost pursuers arrived just in time to see Captain Bob's legs & shoe-buckles vanishing through the trap-door in the joists overhead, his person having been whirled up by the machinery like any bag of flour, & the trap falling to behind him.

He's gone up by the hoist! said the sergeant, running up the ladder in the corner to the next floor, & elevating the light just in time to see Bob's suspended figure ascending in the same way through the same sort of trap with the second floor. The second trap also fell together behind him, & he was lost to view as before.

It was more difficult to follow now: there was only a flimsy little ladder, & the man ascended cautiously. When they stepped out upon the loft it was empty. [He must ha' let go here, said one of the marines who knew more about mills than the others. "If he had held fast a moment longer he would have been dashed against that beam." [They looked up. The hook by which Bob had held on had ascended to the roof, & was winding round the cylinder. Nothing was visible elsewhere but boarded divisions like the stalls of a stable on each side of the stage they stood upon, these compartments being more or less heaped up with wheat & barley in the grain.

"Perhaps he's buried himself in the corn."

The whole crew jumped into the corn-bins, & stirred about their yellow contents; but neither arm, leg, nor coat tail was uncovered. They removed sacks, peeped among the rafters of the roof; but to no purpose. The lieutenant began to fume at the loss of time.

"What cursed fools, to let the man go! Why look here - what's this?" He had

opened the door by which sacks were taken in from waggons without below, & dangling from the cat-head projecting above it was the rope used in lifting them. "There's the way he went down," the officer continued. "The man's gone."

Amidst mumblings & curses the gang descended the pair of ladders, & came into the open air; but Captain Bob was nowhere to be seen. When they reached the front door of the house the miller was standing on the threshold, half dressed.

"Your son is a clever fellow, miller," said the lieutenant. But it would have been much better for him if he had come quiet.

That's a matter of opinion, said ~~the~~ Loveday.

I have no doubt that's he's in the house.

He may be; & he may not.

Do you know where he is?

I do not: & if I did I should not tell.

Naturally. ~~Well it is only a~~

I heard steps beating up the road, sir. said the sergeant.

They turned from the door, & leaving four of the marines to keep watch round the house, the remainder of the party marched into the lane as far as where the other road branched off. While they were pausing to decide which course to take one of the soldiers held up the light. A black object was discernible upon the ground before them; & they found it to be a hat — the hat of Bob Loveday.

"We are on the track," cried the sergeant, deciding for this direction.

As they tore on rapidly, the footsteps previously heard became audible again, increasing in clearness, which told that they gained upon the fugitive, who in another five minutes stopped, & turned. The rays of the candle fell upon Anne.

"What do you want?" she said, showing her frightened face

They make no reply, but wheeled round & left her. She sank down in the bank to rest, having done all she could. It was she who had taken down Bob's hat from a nail, & dropped it at the turning with the view of misleading them till he should have got clear off.

Chapter XXXII.

Deliverance.

But Anne Garland was too anxious to remain long away from the centre of operations. When she got back she found that the press-gang were still standing in the court discussing their next move.

"Waste no more time here," the lieutenant said. "Two more villages to visit to-night, & the nearest three miles off. There's nobody else in this place; & we can't come back again."

When they were moving away one of the private marines, who had kept his eye on Anne, & noticed her distress, continued to say in a whisper as he passed her: "We are coming back again as soon as it begins to get light. That's only said to deceive ye. Keep your young man out of the way."

They went as they had come; & the little household then met together, Mrs Loveday having by this time dressed herself & come down. A long & anxious discussion followed.

"Somebody must have told upon the chap," Loveday remarked. "How should they have found him out else, & now he's been home from sea this twelvemonth?"

Anne then mentioned what the friendly marine had told her; & fearing lest Bob was still in the house, & would be discovered there when daylight came, they searched & called for him everywhere.

"What clothes has he got on?" said the miller.

"His new suit," said his wife. "I warrant it is quite spoiled!"

"He's got no hat," said Anne.

"Well," said Loveday, "you two go & lie down now, & I'll bide up; & as soon as he comes in, which he'll do most likely in the course of the night, I'll let him know that they are coming again."

Anne & Mrs Loveday went to their bedrooms, & the miller entered the mill, as usual if he were simply staying up to grind. But he continually left the flour-shoot to go outside & walk round; each time he could see

no living being near the spot. Anne meanwhile had lain down dressed upon her bed, the window still open, her ears intent upon the sound of footsteps, & dreading the reappearance of daylight & the gang's return. Three or four times during the night she descended to the mill to enquire of her stepfather if Bob had shown himself, but the answer was always in the negative.

At length the ~~white~~ curtains of her bed began to reveal their whiteness, the brass handles of the drawers gleamed forth, & day dawned. While the light was yet no more than a suffusion of pallor she rose, put on her hat & determined to explore the surrounding premises before the men arrived. Emerging into the raw loneliness of the daybreak she went upon the bridge, ~~without going into the mill~~, & looked up & down the road. It was as she had left it, empty; & the solitude was rendered yet more insistent by the silence of the mill, which ~~was~~ now stopped. The miller having given up expecting Bob & retired to bed about three o'clock. The footprints of the marines ~~still~~ remained on the dust of the highway, all the heel-marks towards the house, showing that the party had not as yet returned.

While she lingered she heard a slight noise in the other direction, & turning saw a woman approaching. The woman came up quickly, & to her amazement Anne recognised Matilda. Her walk was convulsive; face ~~was~~ pale, almost haggard, & in the cold light of the morning ~~ed~~ invested it with all the ghastliness of death. She had plainly walked ~~some distance~~ all the way from Weymouth, for her shoes were covered with dust.

Has – the press-gang been here? she gasped. If not they are coming!

They have been

And got him? – I am too late!

No – they are coming back again. Why did you —

I came to try to save him. Can we save him? Where is he?

Anne looked the woman in the face, & it was impossible to doubt that she was in earnest. I don't know, she answered. I am trying to find him before they come.

Will you not let me help you? cried the repentant Matilda.

Without either objecting or assenting Anne turned & led the way to the back part of the homestead.

Matilda, too, had suffered that night. From the moment of parting with Anne Withers she had experienced a sentiment of revulsion from the act to which she had been a party set in & increased, till at length it reached an intensity of remorse which she could not personally bear. She had risen before day & hastened hitherward to know the worst, & if possible hinder consequences that she had been the first to set in train.

After going hither & thither in the adjoining field Anne entered the garden, the two girls. The walks were bathed in grey dew, & as she passed observantly along them it appeared as if they had been brushed by some foot at a much earlier hour. At the end of the garden, bushes of broom, laurel, & yew formed as a constantly encroaching shrubbery that had come there almost by chance, & was never trimmed. Behind these bushes was a garden seat; & upon it lay Bob sound asleep.

The ends of his hair were clotted with damp, & there was a foggy film upon the mirror-like buttons of his coat, & upon the buckles of his shoes. His breast of new gold seals was dimmed by the same insidious dampness; his shirt-frill & muslin neckcloth were limp as sea-weed. It was plain

["It cannot be helped. It is neck or nothing with us now!"

So they emerged upon the road, & staggered along without speaking, occasionally resting for a moment to ease their arms; & then shaking him to arouse him, & finding it useless, laying him again. When they had gone about two-hundred yards Anne began to feel exhausted Matilda showed signs of exhaustion & she asked, "Is there no shelter near?"

"When we get to that little field of corn," said Anne.

"It is so very far. Surely there is some place here? She pointed to a a few scrubby bushes overhanging a little stream which passed under the road & near this point.

Without either objecting or assenting Anne turned & led the way to the back part of the homestead.

Matilda too had suffered that night. From the moment of parting with Mary Derriman a sentiment of revulsion from the act towards she had been a party set in & increased, till at length it reached an intensity of remorse which she could not previously learn. She had risen before day & hastened hitherward to know the worst, & if possible hinder consequences that she had been the first to set in train.

After going hither & thither in the ~~adjoining~~ adjoining field Anne entered the garden ~~the two girls~~ The walks were bathed in ~~heavy~~ grey dew, & as ~~she~~ the passed observantly along them it appeared as if they had been brushed by some foot at a much earlier hour. At the end of the garden, bushes of broom, laurel, & yew formed ~~an~~ a constantly encroaching shrubbery that had come there almost by chance, & was never trimmed. Behind these bushes was a garden seat; & upon it lay Bob sound asleep.

The ends of his hair were clotted with damp, & there was a foggy film upon the mirror-like buttons of his coat, & upon the buckles of his shoes. His trinket of new gold seals was dimmed by the same ~~and~~ insidious dampness; his shirt-frill & muslin neckcloth were limp as sea-weed. It was plain

that he had been there a long time. Anne shook him; but he did not awake, his breathing being slow & stertorous. "Bob, wake – 'tis your own Anne!" she said with unaccustomed earnestness; & then fearfully turning her head she saw that Matilda Jukes was close behind her. "You need do it no more, said Matilda bitterly. I am on your side now. Shake him again." Anne shook him again, but he slept on. Then she noticed that his forehead bore the mark of a heavy wound.

"I fancy I hear something!" said her companion starting forward & endeavoured to wake Bob herself. "He is stunned or drugged! she said. There is no rousing him!"

Anne raised her head & listened. From the direction of the eastern road came the sound of a steady tramp. "They are coming back!" she said clasping her hands. "They will take him, ill as he is. He won't open his eyes – no, it is no use! O what shall we do!"

Matilda did not reply, but running to the end of the seat on which Bob lay, tried its weight in her arms. "It is not too heavy" she said. "You take that end, & I'll take this. We'll carry him away to some place of hiding."

Anne instantly seized the other end, & they proceeded with their burden at a slow pace to the lower garden gate, which they reached as the tread of the press gang resounded over the bridge that gave access to the mill-court, now hidden from view by the hedge & the trees of the garden.

"We will go down inside this field, said Anne, faintly."

"No" said the other "they will see our foot-tracks in the dew. We must go into the road."

"It is the very road they will come down when they leave the mill" said Anne.

"It cannot be helped. It is neck or nothing with us now!"

So they emerged upon the road, & staggered along without speaking, occasionally resting for a moment to ease their arms; then shaking him to arouse him, & finding it useless seizing the seat again. When they had gone about two-hundred yards Matilda showed signs of exhaustion & she asked, "Is there no shelter near?"

"When we get to that little field of corn," said Anne.

"It is so very far. Surely there is some place here?" She pointed to a few scrubby bushes overhanging a little stream which passed under the road & near this point.

*[Matilda broke the silence. "I wonder if they have left a watch behind? she said doubtfully.

I will go & see, said Anne. Wait till I return.

No. I can do no more. When you come back I shall be gone. I ask one thing of you. If all goes well with you & him, & he marries you —don't be alarmed; my plans lie elsewhere — when you are his wife tell him who helped to carry him away. But don't mention my name to the rest of your family, either now or at any time.

Anne regarded the speaker for a moment, & promised; after which she waded out from the archway; [illegible].

Matilda stood looking at Bob for a moment, as if preparing to go; till moved by some impulse she bent & lightly kissed him once.

How can you! cried Anne reproachfully. When leaving the mouth of the arch she had bent back & seen the act.

Matilda flushed. "You jealous baby!" she said scornfully.

Anne hesitated for a moment, then went out from the water, & hastened towards the mill.

They are not thick enough, said Anne.
Let us take him under the bridge, said Matilda. I can go no further.

They Entered the opening by which cattle descended to drink, & waded into the weedy water, which here rose a few inches above their ancles, & ascending the stream they stoop under the arch, & reach the centre of the roadway was the work of a few minutes.

"If they look under the arch we are lost." murmured Anne
"There is no parapet to the bridge, & they may pass over without thinking."

They waited, their heads almost in contact with the reeking arch, & their feet cpericled over by the stream, which was at its summer lowness now. For some minutes they could hear nothing but the babble of the water over their ancles & round the legs of the seat on which Bob slumbered, the sounds being reflected in a musical tinkle from the hollow sides of the arch. Anne's anxiety now was lest he should not continue sleeping till the search was over, but start up with his habitual imprudence, & scorning such means of safety rush out into their arms. A quarter of an hour dragged by, & then reverberations reached their ears that the re-examination of the mill had begun & ended. The well-known tramp drew nearer & reverberated through the ground over their heads, where its volume signified to the listeners that the party had been largely augmented by pressed men since the night preceding. The gang passed the arch, & the noise regularly diminished as if no man among them had thought of looking aside for a moment.

[illegible]

Matilda waded from under the bridge, & Anne joined on. She looked up from Bob, then at the [illegible] end of the arch, & she stooped & kissed him after which she blushed as if the signal of mischief that night swimming round her combined recklessness & impishness of her act. Next she bathed the wound in

She entered by the garden & seeing no one advanced & peeped in at the window. Her mother & Mr Loveday were sitting within as usual.

"Are they all gone?" said Anne softly

Yes. They did not trouble us much, beyond going though they went into every room,

X. he did not rouse himself until some time after he had been
borne into the house. There he opened his eyes, & saw them standing
round, & gathered a little consciousness.

& searching about the garden where they saw steps. They have been lucky to-night; they caught & have fifteen or twenty young men at places along further on
Bob was no hurt to their feelings. I wonder where in the world the poor fellow is!"

I will show you, said Anne. And explaining in a few words what had happened she was promptly followed by David & Loveday along the road. She lifted her dress & entered the arch with some anxiety on account of Matilda; but that lady was gone, & Bob lay on the seat as she had left him.

Bob was brought out, & water thrown upon his face; but though he moved

"You are all right, my boy! said his father. What hev happened boye? Where did ye get that terrible blow?

"Ah – I can mind now," murmured Bob, with a stupefied gaze around. "I was too short, & I fell upon my head. fell in slipping down the topsail halyard – the rope, that is, And then I went away. When I came back I thought I would'nt disturb ye, so I lay down out there, to sleep out the watch; but the pain in my head was so great that I couldn't get to sleep. And then I had no baccy, that's how it was; so I picked some of the poppy flowers in the border, which I once heard was a good thing for sending folks to sleep when they are in pain. So I chawed up all I could find, & dropped off quite nicely.

"I wondered who had picked 'em!" said Molly. "I noticed they were gone."

"Why, you might never have woke again!" said Mrs Loveday holding up her hands. "How is your head now?

"I hardly know," replied the young man, putting his hand to his forehead & beginning to doze again. "Where be those fellows that boarded us? – with this smooth water & fine breeze we ought to get away from 'em – haul in the larboard braces & bring her to the wind."

"You are at home, dear Bob," said Anne bending over him. "And the men are gone."

"Come along upstairs; the lassie handy awake now," said his father: and Bob was assisted to bed.

The Trumpet-Major

Part XI - No 5

[238–251 missing] 252

Chapter XXXIV continued.

The wild, herbless, weather-worn promontory was quite a solitude, & saving the one old lighthouse about fifty yards up the slope, scarce a mark was visible to show that humanity had ever been near the spot. Anne found herself a seat on a stone, & swept with her eyes the tremulous expanse of water around her, that seemed to utter a ceaseless unintelligible incantation. Out of the three hundred & sixty degrees of her complete horizon, two hundred & fifty were covered by waves, the coup d'œil including the area of troubled water known as the Race, where two seas met to effect the destruction of such vessels as could not be mastered by one. She counted the craft within her view: there were five; no, there were only four; no, there were seven, some of the specks having resolved themselves into two. They were all small coasters, & kept well within sight of land.

Anne sank into a reverie. Then she heard a slight noise on her left hand, & turning beheld an old sailor, who had approached with a glass. He was levelling it over the sea in a direction to the south-east, & somewhat removed from that in which her own eyes had been wandering. Anne moved a few steps thitherward, so as to enclose in her view a deeper expanse on that side, & by this discovered a ship of far larger size than any which had yet dotted the main before her. Its sails were for the most part new & clean, & in comparison with its rapid progress before the wind the small brigs & ketches seemed standing still. Upon this striking object the old man's glass was bent.

"What do you see, sailor?" she asked.

Nothing. Almost he answered. My sight is so gone off lately that things, one & all, are but a November mist to me. And yet I would fain would see to-day. I am looking for the Victory.

Why? she said quickly.

I have a son aboard her. He's one of three from these parts: there's the captain, there's my son Ned, & there's young Loveday of Overcombe – he that's lately joined.

Shall I look for you? said Anne after a pause.

Certainly, mis'ess, if so be you please. she said;

Anne took the glass, & he supported it by his arm. "It is a large ship with three masts, ~~& a~~ three rows of guns along the side, & all her sails set."

I guessed as much.

There is a little flag in front – over by her bowsprit.

The jack?

And there's a large one flying at her stern

The ensign.

And one on her topmast.

That's the admiral's flag, the flag of my Lord Nelson. What is her figure-head my dear?

A coat of arms, supported on this side by a sailor. on the other side. of that figure-head

Involuntarily she companion nodded. with satisfaction. "On the other side is a marines"

~~foot~~. She is twisting round & her sails shrink in like old cheeks; & she shivers like a

~~bird that has been playing lately~~ leaf upon the tree.

She is in stays, for the larboard tack I can see what she's been doing. She's been tacking close in to avoid the flood tide, as the wind is on the sou'-west, & she's bound down; but as soon as the ebb made, d'ye see, they'll make sail to the west'ard

"And now I can see the other side; it is a soldier where a sailor was before. ~~She is~~ You are sure it is the Victory?

"I am sure" Captain Hardy may be depended upon for that: he knows every current about here, being a native

After this a frigate came into view – the Euryalus – sailing in the same direction. Anne sat down, & her eyes never left the ships. "Tell me more about the Victory," she said.

She is the best sailer in the service, & she carries a hundred ~~guns~~ guns. The heaviest be on the lower deck, the next size on the middle deck, the next on the main & upper decks. My son Ned's place is on the lower deck, because he's short, & they put the short men below.

Bob, though not tall, was not likely to be specially selected for shortness. She pictured him on the upper main deck, in his snow-white trousers & jacket of navy blue, looking perhaps towards the very point of land where she then was.

The great silent ship, with her population of blue jackets, marines, officers, captain, & the admiral who was not to return alive, passed like a phantom the meridian of the Bill. Sometimes her aspect was that of a large white hat, sometimes that of a grey one. In the course of time the watching girl saw that the ship had passed her nearest point; & the breadth of her sails diminished by foreshortening, till she assumed the form of an egg on end. After this something seemed to twinkle, & Anne, who had previously withdrawn from the old sailor, went back to him, again & looked again through the glass. The twinkling was the light falling upon the cabin-windows of the ship's stern. She explained it to the old man.

"Then we see now what the enemy have seen but once. That was in seventy-nine, when she sighted the French & Spanish fleet off Scilly, & she retreated because she feared a landing. Well, 'tis a brave ship, & she carries brave men!" [illegible] Anne's bosom heaved; but she said nothing, & again became absorbed in contemplation: ~~the~~ the Victory was fast dropping away. ~~She murmured in a voice of sweet solemnity: They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; these see the works of the Lord & his wonders in the deep.~~

The Victory was on the horizon, & soon appeared half down. That seemed to be ~~like the beginning of the end~~ a greater end than her present remaining Anne thought. She could not stay by the sailor any longer, & went about a stone's throw off, where she was hidden by the inequality of the cliff from his view. The vessel was now exactly end on, & stood out in the direction of the Start, her width having contracted to the proportion of a

feather. She sat down again, & mechanically took out some biscuits that she had brought, foreseeing that her waiting might be long. But she could not eat one; eating seemed to jar with the mental tenseness of the moment; & her undeviating gaze continued to follow the lessened ships with the fidelity of a balanced needle to a magnetic stone, all else in her being motionless.

The courses of the Victory were absorbed into the main, then her topsails went, & then her top-gallants. She was now no more than a dead fly's wing on a sheet of spider's web; & even this fragment diminished. Anne could hardly bear to see the end, & yet she resolved not to flinch. The admiral's flag sank behind the watery line, & in a minute the very truck of the last topmast stole away. The Victory was gone.

Anne's lips quivered as she murmured, without removing her wet eyes from the vacant solemn horizon: "They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters! ....."

"There see the works of the Lord, & his wonders in the deep," was replied by a man's voice from behind her. Turning quickly she saw a soldier standing there; & the grave eyes of John Loveday were bent on her.

"It is what I was thinking," she said, trying to be composed.

You were saying it, he answered gently.

Was I — I did not know it.... How came you here? she presently added.

I have been behind you a good while; but you never turned round.

"I was deeply occupied", she said in an undertone.

Yes.... I too came to see him pass. I heard this morning that Lord Nelson had embarked, & I knew at once that they would sail immediately. The Victory & the Euryalus are to join the rest of the fleet at Plymouth — there was a great crowd of people assembled to see them off —; they cheered him & the ship as she dropped down. He took his coffin on board with him, they say.

His coffin? said Anne, turning deathly pale. Something terrible, then, is meant by that! Oh, why would Bob go in that ship — from the very beginning like this! doomed to destruction

"It was his determination to sail under Captain Hardy, & under no one else," said John gravely. "There may be hot work; but we must hope for the best." And observing how wretched she looked he added, But won't you let me help you back? If you can walk as far as Church-Hope Cove it will be enough: there is a lerret going from there to Weymouth harbour in the course of an hour; (it belongs to a man I know,) & they can take one passenger. I am sure.

She turned her back upon the Channel, & by his help soon reached the place indicated. The boat was lying there as he had said. She found it to belong to the old man who had been with her at the Bill, & was in charge of his two younger sons. The trumpet-major helped her into it over the slippery blocks of stone, & as soon as they pushed from shore (one of the young men spread his jacket for her to sit on.) Hardy John climbed up the blue-gray cliff & disappeared over the top, to return to Weymouth by the Chesil road.

Anne was in the town by three o'clock. The trip, in the stern of the lerret, had quite refreshed her, & by the help of the biscuits which she had at last been able to eat. The van from Weymouth to Overcombe did not start till four o'clock, & feeling no further interest in the gaieties of the place she strolled on through Radipole, her mind settling down again upon the possibly sad fate of the Victory as she found herself alone. She did not hurry on, & finding that even now there wanted another half-hour to the carrier's time she turned into a little lane to escape the inspection of the numerous passers by. Here all was quite lonely & still, & she sat down under a willow-tree, absently regarding the landscape, which now began to put on the rich tones of declining summer, but while to her eyes was as hollow & faded as a theatre by day. She could hold out no longer; burying her face in her hands she wept bitterly without restraint. Some yards behind there was a little spring of water, having a stone margin round it to prevent the cattle from treading in the sides, & filling it up with dirt. While she wept two elderly gentlemen entered unperceived upon the scene, & walked on to the spring's brink. Here they paused, & looked in, afterwards moving round it, & then stooping as if to smell or taste its waters. The spring

was in fact a sulphurous one, recently discovered by a physician who lived in the neighbourhood; & it was beginning to attract some attention, having by common report contributed to effect such wonderful cures as almost passed belief. After a considerable discussion, apparently on how the pool might be improved for better use, one of the two elderly gentlemen turned away, leaving the other still probing the spring with his cane. The first stranger, who wore a blue coat with gilt buttons came on in the direction of Anne Garland, & seeing her sad posture went quickly up to her & said abruptly "What is the matter?"

Anne, who in her grief had observed nothing of the gentlemen's presence, withdrew her handkerchief from her eyes, & started to her feet. She instantly recognised her interrogator as the King.

"What, crying?" his majesty inquired kindly. "How is this?"

"I – have seen a dear friend go away, Sir." she faltered with downcast eyes.

Ah – partings are sad – very sad – for us all. You must hope that he will return soon. Where is he gone?

I don't know, your majesty.

Don't know – how is that?

He is a sailor on board the Victory

"Then he has reason to be proud." said the King with interest. He is your brother?

Anne tried to explain what he was, but could not, & blushed with painful intensity

Well, well; what is his name?

In spite of Anne's confusion & low spirits her natural woman's shrewdness told her at once that no harm could be done by revealing Bob's name; & she answered, His name is Robert Loveday, Sir.

Loveday – a good name. I shall not forget it. Now dry your cheeks, & don't cry any more. Loveday – Robert Loveday.

Anne curtseyed, the King smiled good humouredly, & turned to rejoin his companion,

※ This brought them much together; & at these times John was often awkward & confused, through on account of the unwonted stress of concealing his great love for her.

who was afterwards heard to be Dr. ——, the physician in attendance at Gloucester Lodge. This gentleman had in the meantime filled a small phial with the medicinal water, & the latter carefully placed in his pocket; & the king coming up they returned together & disappeared. Thereupon Anne, now thoroughly aroused, followed the same way with a gingerly tread, just in time to see them get into a carriage which was in waiting at the turning of the lane.

She quite forgot the carrier, & everything else in connection with getting home. Flying along the road rapidly & unconsciously, that when she awoke to a sense of her whereabouts she was so near to Overcombe as to make the carrier not worth waiting for. She had been borne up in this hasty spurt at the end of a weary day by visions of Bob promoted to the rank of admiral, or something equally wonderful, by the king's special command, the chief result of the promotion being, in her arrangement of the piece, that he would stay at home & go to sea no more. But she was not a girl who indulged in extravagant fancies long, & before she reached home she thought that the king had probably forgotten her by that time, & her troubles, & her lover's name.

Chapter XXXV

A sailor enters.

The remaining fortnight of the month of September passed away, with a general decline from the summer's excitements. The Royal family left Weymouth the first week in October, the German Legion with their artillery about the same time. The dragoons still remained at Radipole barracks, & John Loveday brought to Anne every newspaper that he could lay hands on, especially such as contained any fragment of shipping news. Her interests had grandly developed from the limits of Overcombe & Weymouth life to an extensiveness truly European. During the whole month of October, however, not a single grain of information reached her, or anybody else, concerning Nelson & his blockading squadron off Cadiz. There were the customary bad jokes about

Bonaparte, especially when it was found that the whole French army had turned its back upon Boulogne & set out for the Rhine. Then came accounts of his march through Germany & into Austria; but not a word about the Victory.

At the beginning of autumn John brought news which fearfully depressed her. The Austrian General Mack had capitulated with his whole army. Then she revived the old misgivings as to invasion. "Instead of having to cope with him weary with waiting, we shall have to encounter this Man fresh from the fields of victory," ran the newspaper article.

But the week which had led off with such a dreary piping was to end in another key. On the very day when Mack's army was piling arms at the feet of its conqueror, a blow had been struck by Bob Loveday & his comrades which shattered almost the enemy's force by sea. Four days after the receipt of the Austrian news Corporal Fullidge ran into the mill's house to inform him that the stage-coaches on the highway from Exeter to London were chalked with the words "Great Victory", "Glorious Triumph", & so on; & that all the country people were wild to know particulars. On the previous Monday, at eleven in the morning, the Pickle schooner, Lieutenant Lapenotiere, had arrived at Falmouth with despatches from the fleet; that

On Friday afternoon John arrived with authentic news of the battle off Cape Trafalgar & the death of Nelson. Captain Hardy was alive; he had escaped with the loss of his shoe-buckle. But it was feared that the Victory had been the scene of the heaviest slaughter among all the ships engaged, though as yet no returns of killed & wounded had been issued, beyond a rough list of the numbers in some of the ships.

The suspense of the little household in Overcombe Mill was great in the extreme. John came thither daily for more than a week; but no further particulars had reached England, till the end of that time, when little more than that there had been a gale immediately after the battle, & that many of the prizes had been lost.

Anne said little to all these things, & preserved a superstratum of calmness on her countenance; but some inner voice seemed to whisper to her that Bob was no more.

Miller Loveday drove to Portisham more than once, to learn if the Captain's

than mere flying reports;
sisters had received any more definite tidings, but that family had heard
nothing which could in any way relieve the miller's anxiety. When at last, at
the end of November, there appeared a final & revised list of killed & wounded assigned
Admiral Collingwood, it was a useless sheet to the Lowndeys. To their great pain it
contained no names but those of officers, the friends of ordinary seamen
& marines being in those days left to discover their losses as best they
might.

Anne's conviction of her loss increased with the darkening of the early
winter days. Bob was not a cautious man who would avoid needless
exposure, & a hundred & fifty of the Victory's crew had been disabled or
slain. Anybody who had looked into her room at this time would have seen
that her favourite reading was the office for the burial of the dead at sea,
beginning "We therefore commit his body to the deep". In these first days of
December several of the victorious fleet came into port; but not the Vic-
tory. Many supposed that that noble ship, disabled by the battle, had gone
to the bottom in the subsequent tempestuous weather; & the belief was per-
severed in till it was told in Weymouth that she had been seen passing
up the Channel. Two days later the Victory anchored at Portsmouth.

Then letters from survivors began to appear in the public prints which
John so regularly brought to Anne; but though he watched the mails
with unceasing vigilance there was never a letter from Bob. It some-
times crossed John's mind that his brother might still be alive & well, & that
in his wish to abide by his supposed intention of giving up Anne & home & life, he was
deliberately lax in writing. with deliberate purpose. If so, John thought Bob was carrying
out the idea too thoughtlessly by half, as could be seen by watching the
effects of suspense upon the fair face of the victim, & the anxiety of the
rest of the family.

It was a clear day in December. The first slight snowfall of the season
had been sifted over the earth, & one side of the apple-tree branches in the millers garden

had [illegible] was touched with white, though a few leaves were still lingering on the tops of the younger trees. A short sailor of the royal navy, who was not Bob, or anything like him, crossed the mill court & came to the door. The miller hastened out & brought him into the room, where John, Mrs Loveday, & Anne Garland, were all present.

"I'm from aboard the Victory", said the sailor. "My name's Jim Cornick. And your lad is alive & well."

They breathed rather than spoke their thankfulness & relief, the miller's eye being moist as he turned aside to calm himself; while Anne, having first jumped up wildly from her seat, sank back again under the almost insupportable joy that trembled through her limbs to her utmost finger.

"I've come from Spithead to Portisham, the sailor continued. And now I am going on to father at Weymouth.

"Ah - I know your father," cried the trumpet-major: "Old James Cornick." (It was the man who had brought Anne in his kerret from Portland Bill.)

"And Bob hasn't got a scratch?" said the miller

"Not a scratch", said Cornick.

Loveday then bustled off to draw the visitor something to drink, Anne Garland, with a glowing blush on her face as she knew not what had gone to the back part of the room, where she was the very embodiment of sweet contrast as she slightly swayed herself (in listening to the sailor's words) without speaking. A little tide of happiness seemed to ebb & flow through her, moving & thrilling her figure with it. The seaman & John went on conversing.

"Bob had a good deal to do with barricadin' the hawse holes afore we were in action. & Bob was at one gun, & I was at another, & we could take it by turns to go & see how the battle was going on. We admi'l & the captain were very much pleased at how 'twas done. When the admi'l went up the quarter-deck ladder Cap'n Hardy said a word or two to Bob, but what it was I don't know. However Bob saw the admi'l stagger when a shot struck him, & was one of the two men who carried him to the cockpit. After that he & some other lads jumped aboard the French ship, & I believe they was in her when she struck her flag. What 'a did next I can't say, for the wind had dropped, & the smoke was like a cloud. But 'a got a good deal talked about; & they say there's promotion in store for 'n."

the story Jim Cornick stopped to drink, and

At this point in Jim Seaborn's story a low unconscious humming came from Anne in her distant corner, the faint melody continuing more or less when the conversation between the sailor & the Loredays was renewed.

"We heard before that the Victory was near knocked to pieces," said the miller.

"Knocked to pieces? You'd say so if so be you could see her. Gad, her sides be battered like an old penny piece; & the shot be still sticking in her walls; & her sails be like so many clap-nets, & have run all the way home under jury top-masts; & as for her decks, you may swab wi' hot water, & you may swab wi' cold; but there's the blood-stains, & there they'll bide..... The Cap'n had a narrow escape, like many o' the rest — a shot shaved his ankle like a razor. You should have seen that man's face in the het o' battle: his features were as if they'd been cast in steel."

"We rather expected a letter from Bob before this."

"Well", said Jim Cornick, with a smile of toleration, "you must make allowances. The truth o't is, he's engaged just now at Portsmouth, like a good many of the rest from our ship.... It's a very nice young woman that he's a courting of, & I make no doubt that she'll be an excellent wife for him."

"Ah!" said Mrs Loreday in a warning tone.

"Courting — wife? said the miller

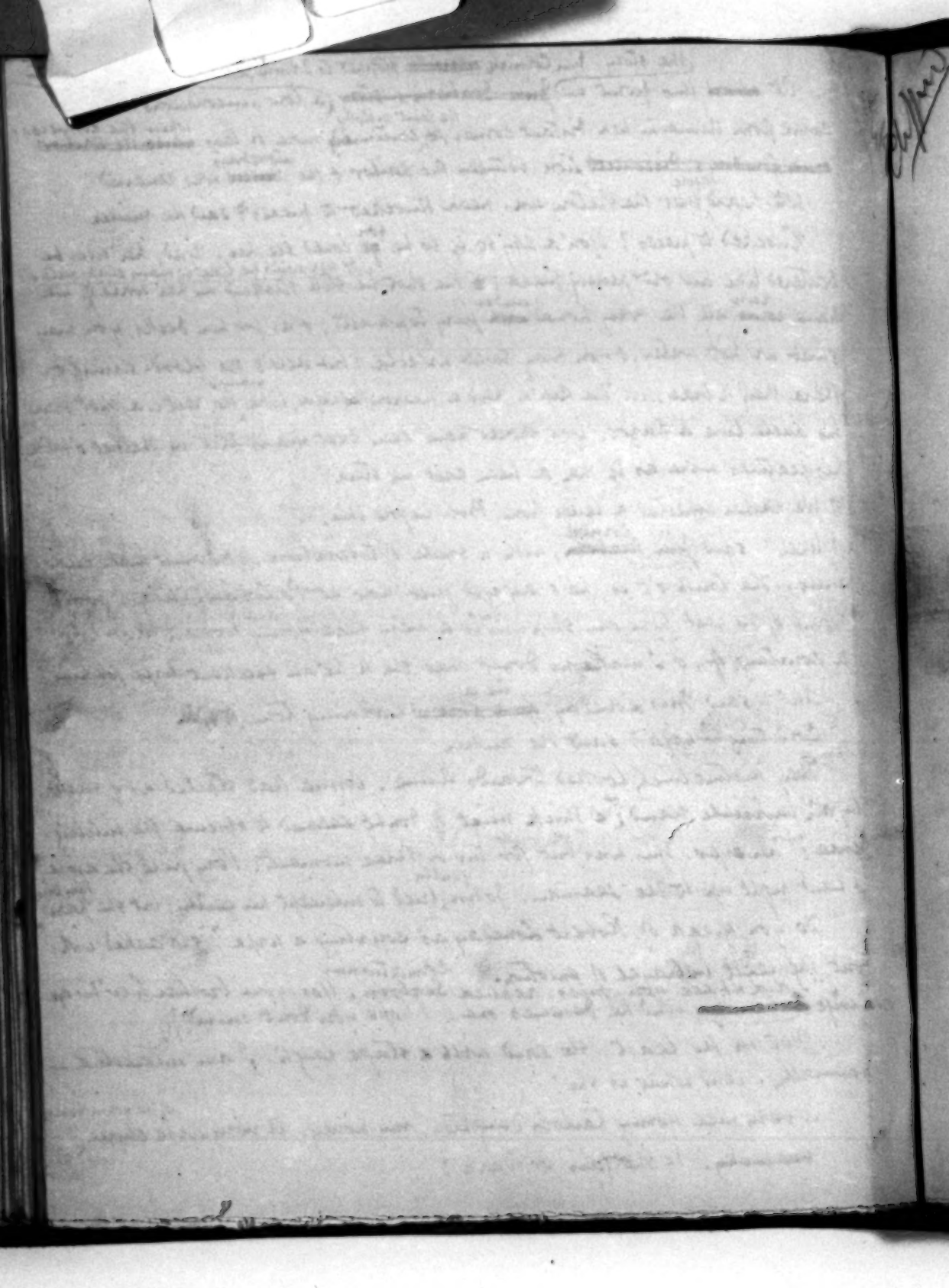
Mary instinctively looked towards Anne. Anne had started as if shaken by an invisible hand, & a thick mist of doubt seemed to obscure the intelligence of her eyes. This was but for two or three moments. Very pale, she arose & went right up to the seaman. John gently tried to intercept her gently; but she passed him by.

"Do you speak of Robert Loreday as courting a wife?" she asked, without the least betrayal of emotion.

"I did n't see you, miss, replied Cornick Seaborn, turning. Yes, your brother has his eye on a wife, & he deserves one. I hope you don't mind?

Not in the least, she said with a stage laugh. I am interested — naturally. And what is she?

"A very nice young tailor's daughter, my honey. A very wise choice" of the young man. Harluckey." Is she fair or dark?"



"Her hair is rather light."

"I like light hair. And her name?"

"Her name is Caroline. But can it be that my story hurts ye – if so –

anxiously
"yes, yes," said John interposing, "We don't care for more just at this moment.

vehemently
"We do care for more," said Anne. "Tell it all, Sailor. That Caroline.
is a very pretty name, When are they going to be married?"

"I don't know as how the day is settled," answered Jim, even now scarcely conscious of the devastation he was causing in one fair breast. "But from scudding along
the rate the courting is at, I should say it won't be long first.
lightly
"If you see him when you go back give him my best wishes," she said as
she added, more solemnly, "say
she moved away. "And that I am glad to hear he is making such good use of
expressing indifference by audibly singing in the
escape from the Valley of the shadow of death.
the first days of this distance
recent consideration were fading from her mind.
She went away,

"Shall we go dance the round, the round, the round,
Shall we go dance the round?"

Comish
"Your sister is lively at the news," observed Jim Seaborn.

"Yes", murmured John gloomily, as he gnawed his lower lip, & kept his eyes fixed on the fire.

intended
"Well," continued the man from the Victory, "I won't say that your brother's
ha'n't got some ballast, which is very lucky for 'n, as he might have picked
without a single copper nail.....
up with a . So be sure there was a time we had when we got into port! it was
And after mentally regarding the scene for a few seconds Jim
open house for us all!" completed his curse & rose to go.

outside the house
The miller was saying some last words to him , Anne's voice
had happily ceased
was still heard singing upstairs, John was standing by the fireplace, & Mrs Loveday was crossing the room to join her daughter, whose manner had given her some uneasiness, when a noise came from above the ceiling, as of some heavy body falling. Mrs Loveday rushed to the staircase, saying "Ah – I feared something!" & she was followed by John.

both one
When they entered Anne's room, which they did almost at the same moment,

they found her lying insensible upon the floor. The trumpet-major, his lips tightly closed, lifted her in his arms, & laid her upon the bed; after which he went back to the door, to give room to her mother, who was bending over the girl with some hartshorn.

Presently Mrs Loveday looked up & said to him; She is only in a faint, John; & her colour is coming back. Now leave her to me: I will be downstairs in a few minutes, & tell you how she is."

John left the room. When he gained the lower apartment his father was standing by the chimney-piece, & the sailor having gone. The trumpet-major went up to the fire, & grasping the edge of the high chimney-shelf stood silent.

"Did I hear a noise when I went out?" asked the elder in a tone of misgiving

Yes, you did, said John. It was she; but her mother says she is better now.... Father", he added impetuously, Bob is a worthless blockhead: if there had been any good in him he would have been drowned years ago!

"John, John – not too fast." said the miller. "That's a hard thing to say of your brother; & you ought to be ashamed of it.

Well, he tries me more than I can bear. Good Heaven, what can a man be made of to go on as he does? Why didn't he come home, or if he couldn't get leave why didn't he write? 'Tis scandalous of him to serve a woman like that.

Gently, gently. He's chap have done his duty as a sailor; & though there might have been something between him & Anne, her mother in talking it over with me has said many times that she couldn't think of their marrying till Bob had settled down in business with me. Folks that gain victories must have a little liberty allowed 'em. Look at the admiral himself, for that matter.

John continued looking at the red coals, till, hearing Mrs Loveday's foot on the staircase he went to meet her.

She is better, said Mrs Loveday. But she won't come down to-day again.

Could John have heard what the poor girl was moaning to herself at that moment as she lay on the bed, he would have doubted her mother's assurance: "If he had been dead willingly I could have borne it, but this I cannot bear!"

Chapter XXXVI
Derriman sees chances.

Meanwhile Sailor Cornick had gone on his way as far as the forking roads, where he met Festus Derriman on foot. He latter, attracted by the seaman's dress, & by seeing him come from the mill, at once accosted him. Jim with the greatest readiness fell into conversation, & told the same story as that he had related at the mill.

"Bob Loveday going to be married?" repeated Festus.

"You all seem struck of a heap wi' that."

"No - I never heard news that pleased me more."

When Cornick was gone Festus, instead of passing straight on, halted on the little bridge & meditated. Bob being now interested elsewhere would probably be very glad to get not resent the siege of Annes heart by another: there could, at any rate, be no possibility of that looming delay which had troubled the young man's mind ever since further his horse play on Anne at the house on the down. To march into the mill & propose to Mrs Loveday for Anne before John's interest could revive in her was, to this hero's thinking, excellent discretion.

The day had already begun to darken when he entered, & the cheerful fire shone red upon the floor & walls. Mrs Loveday received him alone, & asked him to take a seat by the chimney-corner, a little of the old hankering for him as a son-in-law having permanently remained with her.

Your servant, Mrs Loveday, he said. And I will tell you at once what I come for. You will say that I take time by the forelock when I inform you that it is to push on my long wished-for alliance wi' your daughter, as I believe she is now a free woman again.

"But she is ill at present" - "Thank you, Mr Derriman", said the mother placably, "I'll mention it to her when she is better.

"Ask her to alter her cruel resolves against me, on the score of my consuming passion for her." In short", continued Festus dropping his parlour language in his warmth, "I'll tell thee what, Dame Loveday; I want the maid, & I must have her."

Mrs Loveday replied that that was very plain speaking.

"Well" 'tis. But Bob has given her up. He never meant to marry her. I'll tell you, Mrs Loveday, what I have never told a soul before. I was standing upon Weymouth Quay on that very day in last September that Bob set sail, & I heard him say to his brother John that he gave you daughter up".

"Then it was very unmannerly of him to trifle with her so, said Mrs Loveday warmly. Who did he give her up to?

Festus replied with hesitation: "He gave her up to John."

To John? How could he give her up to a man already head & ears over in love with that actress woman?

Oh – you surprise me. Which actress is it?

That Miss Johnson! Anne tells me that he loves her hopelessly.

Festus arose. Miss Johnson seemed suddenly to acquire high value as a guest. at this announcement. He had himself felt a nameless attractiveness in her; & John had done likewise. John crossed his path in all possible ways. [Before the yeoman had replied somebody opened the door, & the firelight shone upon the uniform of the person they were talking of discussed. Festus nodded on recognizing him, wished Mrs Loveday good-evening, & went out precipitately.

"So Bob told you he meant to break off with my Anne when he went away? Mrs Loveday remarked to the trumpet-major. "I wish I had known of it before."

John appeared disturbed at the sudden charge. He murmured that he could not deny it, & then hastily turned from her & followed Derriman, whom he saw before him on the bridge.

"Derriman!" he shouted.

Festus started & looked round. "Well, trumpet-major," he said blandly,

When will you have sense enough to mind your own business, & not come here telling things you have heard by sneaking behind people's backs? demanded John hotly. If you can't learn in any other way I shall have to pull your ears again, as I did the other day!"

You pull my ears? How can you tell that lie when you know 'twas somebody else pulled 'em?"

"Oh no, no. I pulled your ears, & thrashed you in a mild way."

"You'll swear to it – swear 'twas another man?

"It was in the parlour at the public-house: you were almost in the dark." And John added a few details as to the particular blows, which amounted to proof itself.

"Then I heartily ask your pardon for saying 'twas a lie!" cried Festus, advancing with extended hand & a genial smile. Sure, if I had known 'twas you, I wouldn't have insulted you by denying it!

That was why you didn't challenge me, then?

That was it! I wouldn't for the world have hurt your nice sense of honour by letting ye go unchallenged, if I had known! And now, you see, unfortunately I can't mend the mistake. So long a time has passed since it happened that the heat of my temper is gone off: I couldn't oblige ye, try how I might; for I am not a trumpet-major man, that can butcher in cold blood – no, no, I – nor you neither, trumpet-major, from what I know of ye. So willy-nilly, we must jain let it pass – hey?

We must I suppose, said John smiling grimly. Who did you think I was, then, that night when I boxed your ears all round?

No – don't press me! replied the yeoman. I can't reveal: it would be disgracing myself to show how very wide of the truth the mockery of wine was able to lead my senses. We will let it be buried in eternal mixens of forgetfulness.

As you wish, said the trumpet-major loftily. But if you ever should think you knew it was me, why – you know where to find me?" And Loveday walked away.

Loveday walked away. No instant that he was gone Festus shook his fist at the evening star, which happened to lie in the same direction as that taken by the dragoon. "Now for my revenge! Duels? Life-long disgrace to me if ever I fight with a man of blood below my own. There are other remedies for noble souls!... Matilda – that's my way.

Festus strode along till he reached the Hall, where Cripplestraw appeared gazing at him from under the arch of the porter's lodge. Derriman dashed open the

entrance:
hurdle with such violence that the whole row of them fell flat in the mud.

"Mercy, Maister Festus!" said Cripplestraw. "Surely, I says to myself when I see ye a coming, surely Maister Festus is fuming like that because there's no chance of the enemy coming this year after all?

"Cr-r-ripplestraw! I have been wounded to the heart," replied Derriman with a lurid brow.

And the man yet lives – and you wants yer horse-pistols instantly – certainly Maister F—

No, Cripplestraw – not my pistols; but my new-cut clothes – my heavy gold seals – my silver-topped cane – & my buckles that cost more money than he ever saw. Yes, I must tell somebody, & I'll tell you because there's no other fool near. He loves her heart & soul – he's poor; she's tip-top genteel & not rich. I am rich, by comparison. I'll court the pretty play-actress, & win her before his eyes.

A Play-actress, Maister Derriman?

Yes. I saw her this very day – met her by accident & spoke to her. She's still in Weymouth – perhaps because of him: I can meet her at any hour of the day..... But I don't mean to marry her, not I. I will court her for my pastime, & to annoy him: it will be all the more death to him that I don't want her. Then perhaps he will say to me, 'you have taken my one ewe-lamb!' – meaning that I am the King, & he's the poor man, as in the Church verse – and he'll beg for mercy when 'tis too late – unless meanwhile I shall have tired of my new toy." Saddle the horse, Cripplestraw, to-morrow at ten.

Full of this resolve to revenge John Loveday & the quiet through his passion for Miss Johnson. Festus came out booted & spurred at the time appointed, & set off on his morning ride.

Miss Johnson's theatrical engagement having long ago terminated she would have left Weymouth with the rest of the visitors, had not matrimonial hopes detained her there. These had nothing whatever to do with John Loveday, as may be imagined, but with a stout staid boat-builder on the Old Quay, who had shown much

interest in her impersonations. Unfortunately this substantial man had not been quite so attentive since the end of the season as his previous manner led her to expect; & it was a great pleasure to the lady to see Mr Derriman leaning over the Casterbridge bridge with his eyes upon her as she came towards it after a stroll past her elderly wooer's house.

"Od take it, ma'am, did it tell me when I saw you last that the tooting man with the blue jacket & lace was yours devoted?" began Festus.

"Who do you mean?" In Matilda's ever changing emotional interests John Loveday was a stale & unprofitable personality at present.

"Why, that trumpet-major man".

"Oh – what of him?"

"Come; he loves you; & you know it, ma'am."

She knew at any rate how to take the current when it turned. So she glanced at Festus, & folded her lips meaningly, & nodded.

"I've come to cut him out."

She shook her head, it being unsafe to speak till she knew a little more of the subject.

"What?" said Festus reddening. Do you mean to say that you think of him seriously – you who might look so much higher?"

"Constant dropping will wear away a stone; & you should only hear his pleading! His handsome face is impressive, & his manners are – oh so genteel! I am not rich: I am, in short, a poor lady, of decayed family, who has nothing to boast of but my blood & ancestors, & they won't find a body in food & clothing.... I hold the world but as the world, Derriman; a stage where every man must play a part, and mine a sad one." She dropped her eyes mournfully, & sighed.

"We will talk of this", said Festus, much affected. "Let us walk to the look-out."

She make no objection, & said as they turned that way, "Mr Derriman, a long time ago I found something belonging to you, but I have never yet remembered to return it." And she drew from her bosom the paper which Anne had dropped in the meadow when eluding the grasp of Festus on that summer day.

"Zounds, I smell fresh meat," cried Festus when he had looked it over. "'Tis in my uncle's writing, & 'tis what I heard him singing on the day the French fleet came, & afterwards saw him marking in the road. 'Tis something he's got hid away. Give me the paper, there's a dear; 'tis worth sterling gold!

"Halves, then?" said Matilda tenderly.

Gad yes - anything, replied Festus ~~smiling fiercely and blazing~~ blazing into a smile, for she had looked up in her best new manner ~~at~~ at the possibility that he might be worth the winning. They went up the steps to the summit of the cliff, & dwindled over it against the sky.

Chapter XXXVII

Awful Reaction.

There was no letter from Bob, though December had passed & the new year was two weeks old. His movements were, however, pretty accurately registered in the papers which John still bought, but which Anne no longer read. During the second week in December the Victory sailed for Sheerness, & on the ninth of the following January the public funeral of Lord Nelson took place in St. Paul's.

Then there came a meagre line addressed to the family in general. Bob's new Portsmouth attachment was not mentioned, but he told them that he had been one of the eight-&-forty seamen who walked two & two in the funeral procession, & that Captain Hardy had borne the banner of emblems on the same occasion. The crew was soon to be paid off at Chatham, when he thought of returning to Portsmouth for a few days to see a friend. After that he should come home.

But the spring advanced without bringing him, & John watched Anne Garland's desolation with augmenting desire to do something towards consoling her. The old feelings so religiously held in check were stimulated to rebelliousness, though they did not show themselves in any direct manner as yet. They were the cause of his penning a letter to his brother. In this he begged for a distinct statement whether, as the fortune-teller's augur had at first supposed, John Bob's verbal communication of Anne on the quay had been only a momentary

~~ebullition of friendship which it would be cruel to take literally, or~~
~~shallow, as seemed now, it was a standing resolve, persevered in for his own~~
~~pleasure with not a care for the result to poor Anne.~~

~~John waited anxiously for the answer, but there was no reply. The~~
The miller, in the meantime, who seldom interfered in such matters, was ~~~~
~~observed to look meaningly at Anne & the trumpet-major from day to day; & by & by he spoke privately to John.~~
observed to look meaningly at Anne & the trumpet-major from day to day; & by & by he spoke privately to John.

His words were short & to the point: Anne was very melancholy: She had thought too much of Bob. Now it was plain that they had lost him for many years to come. Well; he had always felt that if the two he would rather John married her. Now John might settle down there, & succeed where Bob had failed. "So if you could get her, my sonny, to think less of him & more of thyself, it would be a good thing for all."

An inward excitement had risen in John; but he suppressed it & said firmly; "Fairness to Bob before everything."

He has forgot her, & there's an end on't.

She's not forgot him.

Well, well; think it over.

This discourse was the cause of his penning a letter to his brother. He begged for a distinct statement whether, as John at first supposed, Bob's verbal renunciation of Anne on the quay had been only a momentary ebullition of friendship which it would be cruel to take literally; or whether, as seemed now, it had passed from a hasty resolve to a standing purpose, persevered in for his own pleasure, with not a care for the result to poor Anne.

John waited anxiously for the answer, but no answer came; & the silence seemed even more significant than a letter of assurance could have been of his ~~of her freedom from any of John's~~ absolution from further support to a claim which Bob himself had so clearly renounced. ~~Think it happened that Robert respected~~ Paternal pressure, & brotherly indifference, & his own released impulse operated in one delightful direction, & the trumpet-major approached Anne as in the old time.

But it was not till she had been left to herself for a full five months, & the ~~lilacs & the~~ blue-bells & ragged-robins of eighteen hundred & six were again making themselves common by the rambling path, that he directly addressed her. She was tying up a group of tall flowering plants in the garden; ~~although~~ she knew that he was behind her & she did not turn. She had subsided into a placid dignity which enabled her, when watched, to perform any little action with seeming composure, very different from the flutter of her inexperienced days.

"Are you never going to turn round?" he at length asked good humouredly.

She then did turn, & looked at him for a moment without speaking; a certain suspicion looming in her eyes as if suggested by his perceptible want of ease. "How like summer it is getting to feel, is it not," she said.

John admitted that it was getting to feel like summer: & bending his gaze upon her with an earnestness which no longer left any doubt of his subject, set on to ask; Have you ever in these last months thought of how it used to be between us?

She replied quickly. "Oh John, you shouldn't begin that again: I am almost another woman now.

Well, that's all the more reason why I should, is it not?

Anne looked thoughtfully to the far end of the garden. "I don't quite see it like that," she returned, ~~seemed, shaking her head~~ faintly shaking her head.

You feel yourself quite free, don't you?

Quite free, she said instantly, & with proud distinctness; ~~her~~ her eyes fell, & she repeated more slowly, Quite free. Then her thoughts seemed to fly from herself to him. But you are not.? ~~then~~

I am not?

Miss Johnson.

Oh – that woman! ~~You~~ You know, as well as I, that ~~she~~ was all make up, & that I never for a moment thought of her or knew of her.

I had an idea you were acting; but I was not sure.

Well, that's nothing now. Anne. I want to relieve your life, to cheer you in some way, to make some amends for my brother's bad conduct. If you cannot love me, liking will be well enough. I have thought over every side of it so many times – for ~~weeks~~ months have I been thinking it over – & I am at last sure that I do right to put it to you in this way. That I don't wrong Bob I am quite convinced. As far as he is concerned we ~~are~~ be both free. Had I not been sure of that I would never have spoken. Father wants me to take on in the mill, & it will please him if you can give me one little hope: it will make the house go on altogether better if you can think of me.

"You are ~~so~~ generous & good John"; she said as a big round tear bowled helter-skelter down her face & hat-strings.

"I am not that – I ~~am afraid~~ fear I am quite the opposite", he said ~~smiling~~ without looking at her. "It would be all gain to me..... But you have not answered my question."

She lifted her eyes. "John, I cannot", she said ~~cheerlessly regarding him with a cheerless smile~~ with a cheerless smile. Positively I can-not. Will you make me a promise?

What is it?

I want you to promise first.... Yes, it is (she added, in a mild distress) dreadfully unreasonable, I know. But do promise!

John by this time seemed to have a feeling that it was all up with him for the present. "I promise", he said listlessly.

"It is that you won't speak to me about this for ever so long", she returned with emphatic kindliness.

Very good, he replied. Very good. Dear Anne, you don't think I have been unmanly or unfair in starting this anew?

Anne looked at his face without a smile. "You have been perfectly natural", she murmured. "And so I think have I."

John, mournfully: "You will not avoid me for this, or be afraid of me? I will not break my word. I will not worry you any more."

Thank you John. You need not have said worry. It is not that.

"Well, I am very blind & stupid. I have been hurting your heart all the time without knowing it. It is my fate I suppose. Men who love women the very best always blunder & give more pain than those who love them less.

Anne laid one of her hands in the other as she softly replied, looking down at them: No one loves me as well as you, John; nobody in the world is so worthy to be loved; & yet I cannot any how love you rightly." And lifting her eyes: "But I do so feel for you that I will try as hard as I can to think about you.

Well, that is something, he said smiling. You say I must not speak about it again for ever so long. How long?

Now that's not fair, Anne retorted, going down the garden; & leaving him alone.

Somebody About a week passed. Then one afternoon the miller walked up to Anne indoors, with a weighty topic being impressed in his very tread.

"I was so glad, my honey", he began with a knowing smile, "to see that from the mill-window last week." He flung a nod in the direction of the garden.

Anne innocently inquired what it could be.

Jack & you in the garden together, he continued laying his hand gently on her shoulder & stroking it. It would so please me my dear little girl if you could get to like him better than that weathercock Master Bob.

Anne shook her head, not in forcible negation, but to imply a kind of neutrality.

"Can't you?—come now", said the miller.

She threw back her head with a little laugh of grievance. How you all beset me! she expostulated. It makes me feel very wicked in not obeying you, & being faithful—faithful to—" But she could not trust that side of the subject to words. "Why would it please you so much?" she asked.

John is as steady & stanch a fellow as ever blowed a trumpet. I've always hoped you might do better with him than with Bob. Now I've a plan for taking him into the mill, & letting him have a comfortable time o't after his long knocking about; but so much depends upon you that I must bide a bit till I see what your pleasure is about the poor fellow. Mind, my dear, I don't want to force ye: I only just ask ye."

Anne meditatively regarded the miller from under her shady eyelids, the fingers of one hand playing a silent tattoo on her bosom. I don't know what to say to you, she answered brusquely, & went away.

But these discourses were not without their effect upon the extremely conscientious ~~character~~ mind of Anne. They were powerful, much helped by an incident which took place one evening in the autumn of this year, when John came to tea, after ~~an absence of ten days since his words to her in the garden~~. Anne was sitting on a low stool in front of the fire, her hands ~~being~~ clasped across her knee. John Loveday had just seated himself on a chair close behind her, & Mrs Loveday was in the act of filling the teapot from the kettle which hung in the chimney. The kettle ~~in the act of being lifted~~ slipped forward suddenly; whereupon John jumped from the chair & just (exactly at this time) put his own two hands over Anne's just in time to shield them, & her precious knee she clasped, from the jet of scalding water which had directed itself upon that point. The accidental overflow was instantly checked by Mrs Loveday; but what had come was received by the devoted trumpet-major on the backs of his hands.

Anne, who had hardly been aware that he was behind her, started up like a person awakened from a trance. What have you done to yourself, poor John, to keep it off me! she cried, looking at his hands.

& John ~~blushed~~ reddened emotionally at her words. It is a bit of a scald, that's all, he replied, drawing a finger across the back of one hand, & bringing off the skin by the touch.

"You are scalded painfully, & I not at all." She gazed into his kind face as she had never gazed there before, & when Mrs Loveday came back with oil & other liniments for the wound Anne would let nobody dress it but herself. It seemed as if her coyness had all gone, & when she had done all that lay in her power she still sat by him. At his departure she said what she had never said to him in her life before: "Come again soon!"

In short, that impulsive act of devotion, the last of a series of the same tenor, had been the added drop which finally turned the wheel. John's character deeply

impressed her. His determined steadfastness to his pole star won her admiration, the more especially as that star was herself. She began to wonder more & more how she had contrived to so persistently held out against his advances before Bob came home & renewed girlish memories which had by that time got considerably weakened. Could she not, after all, please the miller, & try to listen to John? By doing so she would make a worthy man happy, the only sacrifice being that of her unworthy self, whose future was at worst no longer valuable. "As for Bob, the woman is to be pitied who loves him." She reflected indignantly, & pretended to envy that, whoever the woman might be, she was not Anne Garland

After this there was something of recklessness & something of pleasantry in the young girl's manner of making herself an example of the triumph of pride & common sense over memory & sentiment. Her attitude had been epitomized in her defiant singing at the time she learnt that Bob was not dead or true! John as was inevitable, came again almost immediately, drawn thither by the sun of her smile & the words which had accompanied it. And now instead of going off to her little pursuits upstairs, downstairs, across the room, in the corner, or any place except where he happened to be, as had been her custom hitherto, she remained seated near him, gave returning interesting answers to his general remarks, & at every opportunity letting him know that at last he had some person in her gift.

The day was fine & they went out of doors, where Anne ~~deliberately~~ seated herself on the sloping stone of the window sill. "How good you have become lately," said John standing over her & smiling in the sunlight, "I fancy you have stayed at home this afternoon on my account."

"Perhaps I did", she said gaily:

"I do whatever we may for him, dame, we cannot do too much.
For he's one that has guarded our land."

And he has done more than that: he has saved me from a dreadful scalding. The back of your hand will not be well for a long time, John, will it?"

He held out his hand to regard its condition, & the next natural thing was to take hers. There was a glow upon his face when he drew it: after its long & weary declination this star was at last on a fair way towards the Zenith

The least penetrating eye could have perceived that Anne had resolved to let him woo, in her generosity to let him win. Whatever silent sorrow might be locked up in her it was by this time thrust a long way down from the light. [illegible] [illegible] "I want you to go somewhere with me if you will," he said still holding her hand.

Yes? Where is it?

He pointed to a distant hill-side which, hitherto green, had within the last few days begun to show scratches of white on its face. "Up there," he said.

I see little figures of men moving about. What are they doing?

Cutting out a huge picture of the king on horseback in the earth of the hill. The king's head is to be as big as our mill-pond & his body as big as this garden; he & the horse will cover more than an acre. When shall we go?

"Whenever you please," said he.

"John!" cried Mrs Loveday from the front door. "Here's a friend come for you."

John went round, & found his trusty lieutenant, Trumpeter Buck, waiting for him. A letter had come to the barracks for John in his absence, & the trumpeter, who was going for a walk, had brought it along with him. Buck then entered the mill to discuss, if possible, a mug of last year's mead with the miller; & John proceeded to read his letter, Anne being still round the corner where he had left her. When he had read a few words he turned as pale as a sheet, but though he did not move, & perused the writing to the end.

Afterwards he laid his elbow against the wall, & put his palm to his head, thinking with painful intentness. Then he took himself in hand, as it were, & gradually became rational again. When he parted from Anne to go home with Buck she noticed nothing different in him.

In barracks that evening he read the letter again. It was from Bob; & the agitating contents were these:

Dear John — I have drifted off from writing till the present time because I have not been clear about my feelings; but I have discovered them at last, & can say beyond doubt that I mean to be faithful

~~This new bargain of mine is~~ (I've got into a bit of a scrape, &)
to my dearest Anne after all. The fact is, John, I've a secret to tell
about it
you, (which must go no further on any account). On landing last autumn
(& we got rather warm without as folks do – in that)
I fell in with a young woman, & we liked one another well enough for a
while. But I have got into deep water, with her & have
found her to be a terrible take-in. Nothing in
her at all – no sense, no laughing, no niceness – all tantrums & empty noise –
~~a weapon no doubt~~ (though she seemed monstrous clever at first.)
John, & so my heart comes back to its old anchorage. &
I hope my return to faithfulness will make no difference to you.
But as you shewed by your looks at our parting that you should not
accept ~~the~~ my offer ~~I made~~ to give her up – made in too much haste as I
have since found – I feel that you won't mind that I have returned to
the path of honour. I dare not write to Anne as yet, & please do
not let her know a word about the other young woman, or there will be the devil to pay.
I shall come
home & make all things right, please God. & Your affectionate brother, Robert.

When the cold daylight (& next morning) fell upon John's face as he
dressed himself, the incipient yesterday's wrinkle in his forehead
had become permanently graven there, ~~& his hair, where it was not~~
~~by the edge of his helmet, seemed to have appreciably nearer to grey~~
~~by a shade~~. He had ~~since the scene in question~~ resolved not to reverse his procedure before it was too late.
But having arranged
to take Anne to see the incised figure of the king, he started for
Winchester during the day, as if nothing had occurred to check the smooth
course of his love.

In the mean time I should take it as a kindness John, if you
would keep a brotherly eye upon Anne, & guide her mind back to
me. I shall die of sorrow if any trick sets her against me, for my
hopes are getting bound up in her again quite strong. Hoping you are jolly & jovial, as times go, I am,

End of Part XI

Chapter XXXVIII
A delicate situation.

"I am ready to go," said Anne as soon as he arrived.

He paused, as if taken aback by her readiness, & replied with much uncertainty: would it – wouldn't it be better to put it off till there is less sun?

The very slightest symptom of surprise ~~showed~~ arose in her as she rejoined: But the weather may change – or had we better not go at all?

Oh no – it was only a thought. We will start at once.

And along the vale they went, John keeping himself about a yard from her right hand. When the third field had been crossed they came upon half a dozen little boys at play.

"Why don't he ~~take~~ clasp her to his side like a man!" said the biggest & rudest little boy.

Why don't he ~~take~~ clasp her to his side like a man!" cried all the rude smaller boys in a chorus.

The trumpet-major turned, & after some running succeeded in smacking two of them with his switch, returning to Anne breathless. "I am ashamed they should have insulted you so," he said blushing for her.

They said no harm ~~you had not to have beat them~~, she replied reproachfully. ~~They did no harm.~~

Poor John ~~replied dumbly~~ was dumb with perception. The gentle hint upon which he would have eagerly spoken only one short day ago was now like fire to his wound.

They presently came to some stepping-stones across a brook. John crossed first without turning his head, & Anne, just lifting the skirt of her dress, crossed behind him. When they had reached the other side a village girl & a young shepherd approached the brink to cross. Anne stopped & turned ~~to look~~ watched them. The shepherd took a hand of the young girl in each of his own, & walked backward ~~on~~ over the stones, facing her, & keeping her upright by his grasp, both of them laughing as they went.

"What are ~~we~~ you staying for, Miss Garland?" asked John.

"I was only thinking how happy they are!" she said quietly; & withdrawing

her eyes from the tender pair, she turned & followed him, not knowing that the seeming sound of a passing bumble-bee was a suppressed groan from John.

When they reached the hill they found forty navvies at work removing the dark sod so as to lay bare the chalk beneath. The equestrian figure that their shovels were forming was unpalatable to John, and Anne, after pacing from the horse's head down his breast to his hoof, back by way of the king's bridle-arm, past the bridge of his nose, & into his cocked hat, Anne said that she had had enough of it, & stepped out of the chalk clearing upon the grass. The trumpet-major had remained all the time in a melancholy attitude within the round of his majesty's right spur.

"My shoes are caked with chalk", she said as they walked downward again; & she drew back her dress to look at them. "How can I get some of it cleared off?"

"If you was to wipe them in the long grass there," said John, pointing to a spot where the blades were rank & dense; "some of it would come off." Having said this he walked on with religious firmness

Anne raked her little feet on the right side, on the left side, over the toe, & behind the heel; but the tenacious chalk held its own. Panting with her exertion she gave it up, & at length overtook him

"I hope it is right now." he said looking gingerly over his shoulder.

No indeed, said she. I wanted some assistance – some one to steady me: it is so hard to stand on one foot & wipe the other without support: I was in danger of toppling over, & so gave it up."

"Merciful stars, what an opportunity!" thought the poor fellow while she waited for him to offer help. But his lips remained closed, & she went on with a pouting smile:

"You seem in such a hurry. Why are you in such a hurry? – After all the fine things you have said about – about caring so much for me, & all that, you won't stop for anything."

It was too much for John. he began.
"Upon my heart & life, my dear—" Here Bob's letter crackled warningly
in his waistcoat pocket as he laid his hand asseverating upon his breast, & he
became suddenly sealed up to dumbness & gloom as before.

When they reached home Anne sank upon a stool outside the door, fatigued
with her excursion. Her first act was to try to pull off her shoe: it was a
difficult matter; but John stood heavily with his switch he leaned off the creeper on the
wall. —Molly—
"Mother—David, or somebody—do come & help me to pull off these dirty
shoes!" she cried aloud at last. "Nobody helps me in anything!"
"I am very sorry," said John coming towards her with incredible slowness
& an air of unutterable misery.
"Oh, I can do without you. David is best," she returned, as the old man
approached & removed the obnoxious shoes in a trice
Anne was amazed ~~struggled~~ at his sudden change from devotion to crass in-
difference. On entering her room she ~~looked~~ flew to the glass, almost expecting to
~~see~~ learn that some extraordinary change had come over her pretty countenance,
rendering her intolerable for evermore. But it was, if anything, fresher than
usual, on account of the exercise. "Well!" she said ~~aloud~~ retrospectively. For the first time
since their acquaintance she had this week encouraged him; & for the first
time he had shown that encouragement was useless. "But perhaps he does
not clearly understand," she added serenely.

When he next came it was, to her surprise, to bring her ~~more~~ newspapers—~~for~~ now for some
time discontinued. as soon as she saw them she said "I do not care for newspapers," ~~she said coolly~~.
"The shipping news is ~~extensive~~ very full & long to-day, though the print is rather small."
"I take no further interest in the shipping news," she replied with cold dignity
She was sitting by the window, inside the table, & hence when, in spite of
her negations, he deliberately unfolded the paper & began to read about the
Royal Navy, she could hardly rise & go away. With a stoical mien he read
on ~~more~~ to the end of the report, bringing out the name of Bob's ship with tremendous force

"No," she said at last. "I'll hear no more. Let me read to you."

The trumpet-major sat down. Anne turned to the military news, delivering every detail with much apparent enthusiasm. "That's the subject I like!" she said fervently.

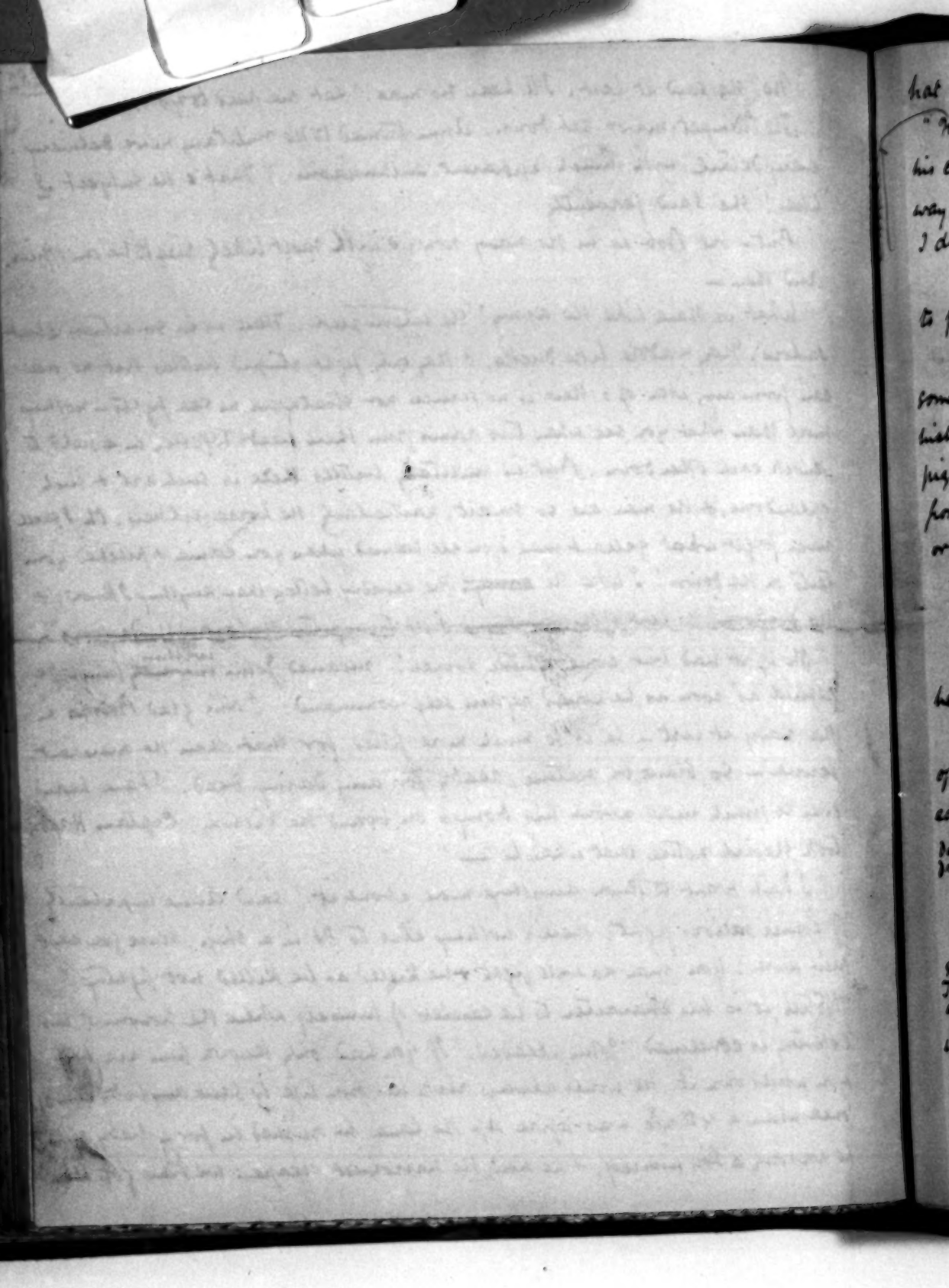
But – but Bob is in the navy now; & will most likely rise to be an officer. And then –

"What is there like the army?" she interrupted. "There is no smartness about sailors. They waddle like ducks, & they only fight stupid battles that no one can form any idea of: there is no science nor stratagem in sea fights – nothing more than what you see when two rams run their heads together in a field to knock each other down. But in military battles there is such art, & such splendour, & the men are so smart, particularly the horse-soldiers. Oh I shall never forget what gallant men you all seemed when you came & pitched your tents on the down! I like the ~~army~~ the cavalry better than anything I know; & the dragoons the best of the cavalry – & the trumpeters the best of the dragoons!"

"Oh if it had but come a little sooner!" moaned John within himself. He replied as soon as he could regain self-command: I am glad Bob is in the navy at last – he is so much more fitted for that than the merchant-service – so brave by nature, ready for any daring deed. I have heard ever so much more about his doings on board the Victory. Captain Hardy took special notice that when he –"

"I don't want to know anything more about it," said Anne impatiently "Of course sailors fight: there's nothing else to do in a ship, since you can't run away. You may as well fight & be killed as be killed not fighting."

"Still, it is his character to be careless of himself when the honour of his country is concerned," John pleaded. "If you had only known him as a boy you would own it. He would always risk his own life to save anybody else's: once when a cottage was afire up the lane he rushed in for a baby, although he was only a boy himself, & he had the narrowest escape: we have got his



hat now with the hole burnt in it. Shall I get it & show it to you?"

"No - I don't wish it. It has nothing to do with me." But as he persisted in his course towards the door she added, "Ah, you are leaving because I am in your way? You want to be alone while you read the paper - I will go at once - I did not see that I was interrupting you." And she rose as if to retreat.

"No, no! I would rather be interrupted by you than ..... Oh, Miss Garland, excuse me - I'll just speak to father in the mill, now I am here."

It is scarcely necessary to state that Anne (whose unquestionable gentility amid somewhat homely surroundings has been many times insisted on in the course of this history) was the reverse of a woman with a coming-on disposition; but whether from pique at his manner, or from wilful adherence to a course rashly resolved on, or from coquettish maliciousness in reaction from long depression, or from this, that, or from that, so it was that she would not let him go.

"Trumpet-Major" she said recalling him.

"Yes?" he replied timidly.

"The bow of my cap-ribbon has come untied, has it not?" She turned & fixed her bewitching glance upon him.

The bow was just over her forehead, or more precisely at the point where the organ of comparison merges in that of benevolence according to the phrenological theory of Gall. John, thus brought to, endeavoured to look at the bow in a skimming duck-&-drake fashion, so as to avoid dipping his own glance as far as to the plane of his interrogator's eyes. "It is untied," he said, drawing back a little.

She came nearer, & asked, "Will you tie it for me, please?"

He nerved himself & assented. As there was no help for it she necessarily looked up for his convenience, & John began fumbling at the bow. Try as he would it was impossible to touch the ribbon without getting his finger-tips mixed with the ends of her forehead.

"Your hand shakes - ah, you have been walking fast" she said.

"Yes - yes."

"Have you almost done it?" She directed her gaze upward through his fingers inquiringly.

"No – not yet", he faltered in a warm sweat of emotion, his heart going like a flail.

"Then be quick, please"

"Yes, I will, Miss Garland. ~~Mr~~ B-B-Bob is a very good fel –"

"Not that man's name to me!" she interrupted.

John was silent instantly, & nothing was to be heard but the rustling of the ribbon; till his hands once more blundered among the ends, & then touched her forehead.

"O good God!" ejaculated the trumpet-major, in a whisper, turning away hastily to the corner-cupboard, & resting his face upon his hand.

What's the matter, John? said she.

I can't do it!

What?

Tie your cap-ribbon

Why not?

Because you are so.....! – I became I am clumsy, & never could tie a bow.

"You are clumsy indeed," answered Anne, & went away.

After this she felt injured, for it seemed to show that he rated her happiness as of meaner value than Bob's; since he had persisted in his idea of giving Bob another chance when she had implied that it was hers to do otherwise with. Could Miss Johnson have anything to do with his firmness? An opportunity of testing him in this direction seemed some days later. She had been up the village, & met John at the mill-door.

"Have you heard the news? Matilda Johnson is going to be married to young Derriman"

Anne stood with her back to the sun, & as he faced her his features were searchingly exhibited. There was no change whatever in them, unless it were that a certain light of interest kindled by her question turned to complete blank indifference. "Well, as times go, it is not a bad match for her," he said, with a phlegm which was hardly that of a lover.

John on his part was beginning to find these temptations almost more than he could bear. But being quartered so near to his father's house it was unnatural not

to visit him, especially when at any moment the regiment might be ordered abroad, a separation of years ensue; & as long as he went there he could not help seeing her.

The year eighteen hundred and seven changed from green to gold, & from gold to grey, but little change came over the house of Loveday. During the last twelvemonths Bob had been occasionally heard of as upholding his country's honour in Denmark, the West Indies, Gibraltar, Malta & other places about the globe, till the family received a short letter stating that he had arrived again at Portsmouth. At Portsmouth Bob seemed disposed to remain, for though some time elapsed without further intelligence, the gallant seaman never appeared at Overcombe. Then on a sudden to John Bob learnt that Bob's long talked of promotion for signal services rendered was to be an accomplished fact. The trumpet major at once walked off to Overcombe & reached the village in the early afternoon. Not one of the family was in the house at the moment & John strolled onwards over the hill without much thought of direction till, lifting his eyes, he beheld Anne Garland coming towards him with a little basket upon her arm.

The field was open, & as for her, she was a conspicuous object, & there was no escaping her. At first John blushed with delight at the sweet vision; but recalled by his conscience, the blush of delight was at once mangled & slain by a glacial expression, as he would have scotched & killed a snake. He looked for a means of retreat.

But [illegible] "It was kind of you to come," she said with a pretty smile.

"It was quite by accident," he answered with an indifferent laugh. "I thought you was at home."

Anne blushed & said nothing, & they rambled walked on together. In the middle of the field rose a ruined fragment of stone wall in the form of a gable, & when they had reached it John paused & politely asked her if she were not a little tired with walking so far. No particular reply was returned by the young lady, but they both stopped, & Anne seated herself on a stone which had fallen from the ruined wall to the ground.

"A church once stood here," observed John in a matter-of-fact tone.

"Yes, I have often shaped it out in my mind", she returned. "Here where I sit must have been the altar.

True: this standing bit of wall was the chancel end.

Anne had been adding up her little studies of the trumpet-major's character, & was surprised to find how the brightness of that character increased in her eyes with each examination. A kindly & gentle sensation was again aroused in her. Here was a neglected heroic man, who, loving her to distraction, deliberately doomed himself to genuine shade to avoid even the appearance of standing in a brother's way.

"If the altar stood here, hundreds of people have been made man & wife just there, in past times," she said with calm deliberateness, throwing a little stone a spot about a yard westward.

~~unthinking~~ ~~crushed~~ ~~groan~~ tender burst by ~~[illegible]~~ & replied: Yes, this field used to be a village. My father can mind when there were houses here. But the Squire pulled 'em down, because poor folk were an eyesore to him.

"Do you know, John, what you once asked me to do?" she continued, not accepting the digression, & turning her eyes upon him.

"In what sort of way?"

~~About~~ "In the matter of my future life, & yours."

"I am afraid I don't."

"John Loveday!"

He turned his back upon her for a moment, that she might not see the spasm of woe which shot through his face. "Ah – I do remember", he said at last, in a dry small repressed voice.

"Well – need I say more. Is it it sufficient?"

"It would be sufficient", answered the unhappy man. "But....."

She looked up with a reproachful smile, & shook her head. "That summer", she went on, "you asked me ten times if you asked me once. I am older now; much more of a woman, you know; & my opinion is changed about some people; especially about one."

"Oh Anne Anne!" he burst out as, racked between honour & desire he snatched up her hand. The next moment it fell heavily to her lap: he had absolutely relinquished it half way to his lips.

I have been thinking lately, he said with preternaturally sudden calmness, that men of the military profession ought not to – ought to be like Saint Paul, I mean.

– Fie, John; pretending religion!" she said sternly. "It is n't that at all. It's Bob."

"Yes!" cried the miserable Trumpet-major. "I have had a letter from him to-day." He pulled out a sheet of paper from his breast. "That's it. He's promoted – he's a lieutenant – he'll be a gentleman some day, & worthy of you!"

He threw the letter into her lap, & ~~marched~~ drew back to the other side of the gable-well. Anne jumped up from her seat, flung away the letter without looking at it, & went hastily on. John did not attempt to overtake her; picking up the letter he followed in her wake at a distance of a hundred yards.

But though Anne had withdrawn ~~in such a huff, that emotion had come~~ from his presence thus precipitately she never thought more highly of him in her life than she ~~ever with her, a few moments afterwards~~ did five minutes afterwards, when the excitement of the moment had passed. She saw it all quite clearly; & his self-sacrifice impressed her so much that the effect was just the reverse of what he had been aiming to produce. ~~could have wished had awakened~~. The more he pleaded for Bob the more her perverse generosity pleaded for John. To-day the climax had come – with what results she had not foreseen.

As soon as the trumpet-major reached the nearest pen-&-ink he flung himself into a seat & wrote wildly to Bob:

Dear ~~brother~~ Robert,

I write these few lines to let you know that if you want Anne Garland you must come at once – you must come instantly & post haste – or she will be gone. Somebody else wants her, & she wants him. It is your last chance, in the ~~opinion~~ opinion of

I know

Your faithful brother & well-wisher

P. S. Glad to hear of your promotion. Tell me the day and I'll meet the coach. John.

Chapter XXXIX

Bob Loveday struts up & down.

One night about a week later, two men were walking in the dark along the turnpike road towards Overcombe, one of them with a bag in his hand.

"Now," said the taller of the two, the squareness of whose shoulders suggested that he wore epaulettes; "now you must do the best you can for yourself, Bob. I have done all I can; but th' hast thy work cut out, I can tell thee.

I wouldn't ha' run such a risk for the world," said the other in a tone of ingenuous contrition. "But thou'st see, Jack, I didn't think there was any danger, knowing you was taking care of her, & nursing my place for me. I didn't hurry myself, that's true; but thinks I, if I get this promotion I am promised I shall naturally have leave, & then I'll go & see 'em all. Gad, I had a'most have been here now but for your letter.

"You little think what risks you've run," said his brother. "However, try to make up for lost time."

All right. And whatever you do, Jack, don't say a word about this other girl. Hang the girl – I was a great fool, I know: still it is over now, & I am come to my senses. I suppose Anne never caught a capsful of wind from that quarter?

She knows all about it, said John seriously.

Knows? By George, then, I'm ruined! [illegible] said Bob, standing stock-still in the road as if he meant to remain there all night.

"That's what I meant by saying it would be a hard battle for ye," returned John with the same quietness as before.

Bob sighed & moved on. "I don't deserve that woman!" he cried, passionately thumping his three upper ribs with his fist.

"I've thought as much myself," observed John with a dryness which was almost bitter. "But it depends on how thou'st behave in future.

John, said Bob, taking his brother's hand, I'll be a new man. I solemnly swear by that eternal milestone staring at me there, that I'll never look at another woman with the thought of marrying her whilst that darling is free – no,

not if she be a mermaiden of light.... It's a lucky thing that I'm slipped in on the quarter-deck – it may help me with her – hey?

It may with her mother: I don't think it will make much difference with Anne. Still, it is a good thing; & I hope that some day you'll command a big ship.

Bob shook his head. "Officers be scarce; But I am afraid my luck won't carry me so far as that."

Did she ever tell you that she mentioned your name to the King?

The seaman stood still again. Never! he said. How did such a thing as that happen, in Heaven's name?

John described in detail; & they walked on, lost in conjecture.

As soon as they entered the house the returned officer of the navy was welcomed with acclamation by his father & David, with mild approval by Mrs Loveday, & by Anne not at all, that discreet maiden having carefully retired to her own room some time earlier in the evening. Bob did not dare to ask for her in any positive manner: he just enquired about her health, & that was all.

"Why – what's the matter with thy face, my son?" said the miller staring. "David show a light here." And a candle was thrust against Bob's cheek, where there appeared a jagged streak like the geological remains of a lobster.

"Oh – that's where that rascally Frenchman's cutlass met with me, you know grenade busted & hit me from the Redoutable, you know, as I told ye in my letter." [not a word!] "What didn't I tell ya? Ah, no – I meant to, but I forgot it."

"And here's a sort of dint in yer forehead too – what do that mean, my dear boy?" said the miller, putting his finger in a chasm in Bob's skull.

"That was done in the Indies. Yes, that was rather a troublesome chop – a cutlass did it. I should have told ye; but I found it would make my letter so long that it wasn't worth while. that I put it off & put it off; & at last thought"

John soon took his departure. "It's all up with me & her, you see," said Bob to him outside the door. "She's not even going to see me."

"Wait a little", said the trumpet-major.

It was easy enough on the night of the arrival, in the midst of excitement, when for awhile blood was warm, to be resolute in her avoidance of Bob Loveday.

But in the morning determination is apt to grow ~~[illegible]~~ molluscous, ~~[illegible]~~ rules of pugnacity are less easily acted up to, & a feeling of live & let live takes possession of the gentle soul. Anne had not meant even to sit down to the same breakfast-table with Bob; but when the rest were ~~[illegible]~~ assembled, & had got some way through the substantial repast which was served at this hour in the miller's house, Anne entered. She came silently as a phantom, her eyes cast down, her cheeks pale. It was a good long walk from the door to the table, & Bob had made a full inspection of her as she came up to a chair at the remotest corner, in the driest rays of the morning light, where she humbly sat herself down.

It was altogether different from how she had expected. Here was she who had done nothing, feeling all the embarrassment; & Bob, who had done all the wrong, felt apparently quite at ease. ~~There was silence & restraint among them for a while.~~

"You'll speak to Bob, won't you, honey?" said the miller after a silence. To meet Bob like this after such an absence seemed irregular in his eyes.

"If he wish me to", she replied, so addressing the miller that no part, scrap, or outlying beam whatever of her glance passed near the subject of her remark.

"He's a lieutenant you know dear", said her mother ("and he's been dreadfully wounded on the same side") "Oh" said Anne turning a little towards the false one; at which Bob felt it to be time for him to put in a stroke for himself.

"I am glad to see you", said he, cordially. "And how do you do?"

"Very well thank you".

He extended his hand: she allowed him to take hers; but only to the extent of a niggardly inch or so. At the same moment she glanced up at him, when their eyes met, & hers were again withdrawn. ~~[illegible]~~

The hitch between the two younger members of the household tended to make the breakfast a dull one. Bob was so depressed by her unforgiving manner that he could not throw that sparkle into his stories which their subsistence naturally required; & when the meal was over, & they went about their different businesses, the pair resembled the two Dromios seldom or never being, thanks to Anne's subtle contrivances, both in the same room at the same time.

~~At last, after [illegible] dogging her~~

This kind of performance repeated itself during several days. At last, after dogging

her hither & thither, leaning with a wrinkled forehead against the doorpost. taking an oblique view into the room where she happened to be, picking up worsted balls & getting no thanks, placing a splinter from the Victory, several bullets from the Redoutable, a strip of the flag, & other interesting relics, carefully labelled, upon her table, & hearing no more about them than if they had been pebbles from the nearest brook, he hit upon a new plan. To avoid him she sat frequently upstairs, in a window overlooking the garden. Lieutenant Loveday carefully dressed himself in a new uniform, which he had caused to be sent some days before, to dazzle admiring friends; but which he had never as yet put on in public or mentioned to a soul. When arrayed he entered the sunny garden, & there walked slowly up & down as he had seen Nelson & Captain Hardy do on the quarter-deck; but keeping his right shoulder, on which his one epaulette was stuck, as much towards Anne's window as possible.

But she made no sign, though there was not the least question that she saw him. At the end of half-an-hour he went in, took off his clothes, & gave himself up to doubt & the best tobacco.

He repeated the programme on the next afternoon, & on the next, [illegible], never saying a word within doors about his doings or his motive.

Meanwhile the results in Anne's chamber were not uninteresting. She had really been looking out on the fifth day, & was duly amazed to see a naval officer in full uniform promenading in the path. Finding it to be Bob she left the window, with a sense that the scene was not for her: then, from mere curiosity, peeped out from behind the curtain. Well, he was a pretty spectacle, she admitted, relieved as his figure was by a dense mass of sunny closely trimmed hedge, over which nasturtiums climbed in wild luxuriance; & if she could care for him one bit, which she couldn't, his form would have been a delightful study, surpassing in interest even its splendour on the memorable day of their visit to the Weymouth theatre. She called her mother; Mrs Loveday came promptly.

"Oh, it is nothing," said Anne indifferently: "Only Bob has got his uniform.

Mrs Loveday peeped out, & raised her hands with delight. "And he has not said a word to us about it! What a lovely epaulette – I must call him his father."

No indeed. As I take no interest in him I shall not let people come into my room to admire him.

"Well, you called me," said her mother.

It was because I thought you liked fine clothes, & uniforms, & all that. It is what I don't care for."

Notwithstanding this assertion she looked out again at Bob the next afternoon when his footsteps rustled on the gravel, & studied with apparent interest his appearance under all the varying angles of the sunlight as if fine clothes & uniforms were not altogether a matter of indifference. He certainly was a splendid, gentlemanly, & gallant sailor from end to end of him; but then, what were a dashing presentment, a naval rank, & telling scars, if a man was fickle-hearted? However, she peeped on till the fourth day; & then she did not peep. The window was open, & she looked right out, and then Bob knew that he had got a rise to his bait at last. He touched his hat to her, keeping his right shoulder forwards, & said "Good-day Miss Garland," with a smile.

Anne replied "Good-day" with funereal seriousness; and but the acquaintance thus revived led to the interchange of a few words at supper-time, at which Mrs Loveday nodded with satisfaction. But Anne took especial care that he should never meet her alone, & to ensure this her ingenuity was in constant exercise. There were so many nooks & windings on the miller's rambling premises that she could never be sure he would not turn up within a foot of her, particularly as his shoes were almost noiseless.

One fine afternoon she accompanied Molly in search of elderberries for making the family wine which was drunk by Mrs Loveday, Anne, & anybody who could not stand the rougher & stronger liquors provided by the miller. After walking rather a long distance over the down they came to a grassy hollow, where elder bushes

in knots of twos & threes rose from an uneven bank & hung their heads towards the south, bleak & heavy with bunches of fruit. The charm of fruit-gathering to girls is enhanced in the case of elderberries by the inoffensive softness of the leaves, boughs, & bark, which makes getting into them easy & pleasant to the most indifferent climbers. Anne & Molly had soon gathered a basket-full, & sending the servant home with it Anne remained in the bush, picking & throwing down bunch by bunch upon the grass. She was so absorbed in her occupation of pulling the twigs towards her, & the rustling of their leaves so filled her ears, that it was a great surprise when, on turning her head, she perceived a similar movement to her own among the boughs of the adjoining bush.

At first the thought they were disturbed by being partly in contact with the boughs of her bush, but in a moment Bob Lovedays face peered from them, at a distance of about a yard from her own. Anne uttered a little indignant "Well!" recovered herself, & went on plucking. Bob thereupon went on plucking likewise; & they looked at each other from their respective bushes like a Jack & a Jill in the green.

"I am picking elderberries for your mother," he at last said humbly.

"So I see."

"And I happen to have come to the next bush to yours."

"So I see." But not the reason why.

Anne was now in the westernmost branches of her bush, & Bob had leant across into the eastern branches of his. In gathering he swayed towards her, back again, forward again. "I beg pardon," he said, when a further swing than usual had taken him almost in contact with her.

"Then why do you do it?"

"The wind rocks the bough, & the bough rocks me." She appraised by a look her opinion of this statement in the face of the gentlest breeze; & Bob pursued: "I am afraid the berries will stain your pretty hands."

"I wear gloves."

Ah - that's a plan I should never have thought of. Can I help you?

"Not at all."

You are offended: that's what that means.

"No." she said

Then will you shake hands?

Anne hesitated; then slowly stretched out her hand, which he took at once. "That will do", she said finding that he did not relinquish it immediately. But as he still held it still she pulled, the effect of which was to draw Bob's swaying person, bough & all, towards her, & herself towards him.

"I am afraid to let go your hand," said he; "for if I do your spar will fly back, & you will be thrown upon the deck with great violence"

"Still I wish you to let me go."

He accordingly did, & she flew back, but did not by any means fall.

"It reminds me of the times when I used to be aloft clinging to a yard not much bigger than this fleet, in the mid-Atlantic, & thinking about you. I could see you in my fancy as plain as I see you now."

"Me, or some other woman," retorted Anne haughtily.

"No," declared Bob, shaking the bush for emphasis, "I protest that I did not think of anybody but you all the time we were dropping down channel, all the time we were off Cadiz, all the time through battles & bombardments I seemed to see you in the smoke, & thinks I, if I go to Davy's locker what will she do!"

"You didn't think that when you landed after Trafalgar."

"Well, now," said Lieutenant Loveday, in a reasoning tone; "that was a curious thing. You'll hardly believe it, maybe; but when a man is away from the woman he loves best in the old port – world I mean, he can have a sort of temporary feeling for another without disturbing the old one, which flows along under the same as ever.

"I can't believe it, & won't," said Anne firmly.

Molly now appeared with the empty basket, & when it had been filled from the heap on the grass Anne went home with her, bidding Loveday a frigid adieu.

when Bob was absent

The same evening, the miller proposed that they should all go to an upper window of the house, to get a distant view of some rockets & illuminations which were to be exhibited in Weymouth at that hour, in honour of the King, who had returned this day year as usual. They accordingly went upstairs, to an empty attic, placed chairs against the window, & put out the light, Anne sitting in the middle, her mother close by, & the miller behind smoking. No sign of any pyrotechnic display was visible over Weymouth as yet, & Mrs Loveday passed the time by talking at the miller, who replied in monosyllables. While this was going on Anne fancied she heard some one approach, & presently felt that Bob was drawing near her in the surrounding darkness; but as the other two had noticed nothing she said not a word.

All at once the watery expanse of southward sky was broken by the blaze of several rockets simultaneously ascending from different ships in the roads. At the very same moment a warm mysterious hand slipped round her own, & gave it a gentle squeeze.

"Oh dear!" said Anne with a sudden start away.

"How nervous you are, child," said Mrs Loveday, "to be startled by friends so far off away."

"I never saw rockets before," murmured Anne recovering from her surprise.

Whatever the miller thought he kept to himself, because it disturbed his smoking to speak. Mrs Loveday presently spoke again. "I wonder what has become of Bob?"

Anne did not reply, being much exercised in trying to get her hand away from the one that imprisoned it;

Another batch of rockets went up. "Oh I never!" said Anne in a half suppressed tone, springing in her chair. A second hand had crept round her waist.

"You certainly must have change of scent, poor girl, at this rate," said Mrs Loveday.

"I suppose I must," murmured the dutiful girl.

For some minutes nothing further occurred to disturb Anne's serenity.

Then a slow quiet "a-hem" came from the doorway of the apartment.

"What – Bob? How long have you been there?" enquired Mrs Loveday.

"Not long," said the lieutenant coolly. "I heard you were all here, & crept up quietly, not to disturb ye."

Why don't you wear heels to your shoes (like Christian people) & not creep about so like a cat.

Well – it keeps your floors clean to go slip-shod.

That is true.

Meanwhile Anne was gently but firmly trying to pull Bob's arm from her waist, her distressful difficulty being that in freeing her waist she enslaved her hand, & in getting her hand free she enslaved her waist. Finding the struggle a futile one owing to the invisibility of her antagonist & her wish to keep its secret from the others, she arose, & saying but she did not care to see any more, felt her way downstairs. Bob followed, leaving Loveday & his wife to themselves.

"Dear Anne," he began, when he had got down, & saw her in the candlelight of the large room. But she adroitly passed out at the other door, at which he took a candle & followed her to the small room. "Dear Anne, do let me speak," he repeated as soon as the rays revealed her figure. But she passed into the bakehouse & before he could say more, whereupon he perseveringly did the same. Looking round for her here he perceived her at the end of the room, where there was no means of exit whatever.

"Dear Anne," he began again, setting down the candle; you must try to forgive me; really you must. I love you the best of anybody in the wide wide world. Try to forgive me; come." and he imploringly took her hand.

Anne's bosom began to heave & fall like a small tide, her eyes remaining fixed upon the floor; till, when Loveday ventured to lean her slightly towards him, she burst out crying. "I don't like you, Bob – I don't!" she suddenly exclaimed behind her sobs. "I did once, but I don't now – I can't, I can't – you have been very cruel to me!" She violently turned away, weeping.

"I have; I have been terribly bad, I know," answered Bob, conscience-stricken by her grief. "But – if you could only forgive me. I promise that I'll never do anything to grieve ye again.... Do you forgive me, Anne?

Anne's only reply was crying & shaking her head.

Let's make it up. Come, say we have made it up, dear.

She withdrew her hand, & still keeping her eyes buried in her handkerchief said "No".

"Very well, then!" exclaimed Bob with sudden determination. "Now I know my doom! And whatever you hear of as happening to me, mind this, you cruel girl, that it is all your causing!" Saying this he strode with a hasty tread across the room into the passage, & out at the door, slamming it loudly behind him.

Anne suddenly looked up from her handkerchief, & stared with round wet eyes & parted lips at the door by which he had gone. Having remained with suspended breath in this attitude for a few seconds she turned round, bent her head upon the table, & burst out weeping anew with three the violence of the former time. It really seemed, now, as if her grief would overwhelm her, all the emotions which had been suppressed, bottled up, & concealed since Bob's return having made themselves a ~~channel~~ sluice at last.

But such things have their end; & left to herself in the large vacant old ~~room~~ apartment she grew ~~calm~~ quieter, & at last calm. At length she took the candle & ascended to her bed-room, where she bathed her eyes & looked in the glass to see if she had made herself a dreadful figure. It was not so bad as she had expected, & she went downstairs again.

Nobody was there, & sitting down she wondered what Bob really had meant by his words. It was too dreadful to think that he intended to go straight away to sea without seeing her again; & ~~the~~ she frightened at what she had done, she waited anxiously for his return. [Chapter XL. A call on business.

Her suspense was interrupted by a very gentle tapping at the door, & then the rustle of a hand over its surface, as if searching for the latch in the dark.

The door opened a few inches, & the alabaster face of Uncle Benjy appeared in the slit.

"Oh Squire Derriman, you frighten me!"

"All alone? he asked in a whisper.

"My mother & Mr Loveday are somewhere about the house.

That will do, he said coming forward. "I be committed out of my life, & I have thought of you again – you yourself, dear Anne, & not the miller. If you will only take this, & lock it up for a few days till I can find another good place for it – if you only would." And he breathlessly deposited the tin box on the table.

What – obliged to dig it up from the cellar? but he & a young woman he's met with are searching everywhere

Ay; my nephew hath got a scent of the place; how, I don't know, while they were scraping in the next cellar! I worked like a wire-drawer to get it up & away. Now where could ye put it, dear? 'Tis only my few documents, & my will, & such-like you know – poor soul o' me, I'm worn out with running & fright!"

"I'll put it here till I can think of a better place," said Anne lifting the box. "Dear me, how heavy it is!"

"Yes, yes", said Uncle Benjy hastily; "the box is iron, you see. However, take care of it, because I am going to make it worth your while. Ah, you are a good girl Anne; I wish you was mine!"

Anne looked at Uncle Benjy. She had known for some time that she possessed all the affection he had to bestow. "Why do you wish that?" she said simply.

"Now don't ye argue with me. Where d'ye put the coffer?"

"Here," said Anne going to the window-seat, which rose as a flap, disclosing a boxed receptacle beneath, as in many old houses. Anne looking down the seat, & giving him the key

"'Tis very well" for the present," he said dubiously & they dropped the coffer in. Now I don't want ye to be on my side for nothing" he went on. "I never did, now, did I? This is for you." He handed her a little packet of papers, which Anne turned over & looked at anxiously.

"I always meant to do it" continued Uncle Benjy, gazing at the packet as it lay in her hand, & sighing. "Come, open it, my dear." She opened it & found twenty guineas snugly packed within.

"Yes, they are for you — I always meant to do it!" he said, sighing again.

"But you owe me nothing!" returned Anne, holding them out.

"Don't say it!" cried Uncle Benjy, covering his eyes. "Put 'em away. Well, if you don't want 'em — but put 'em away, dear Anne: they are for you, because you have kept my counsel. Good night t'ye? Yes, they are for you."

He went a few steps, & turning back added anxiously, "You won't spend 'em in clothes, or waste 'em in fairings, or ornaments of any kind, my dear girl?"

"I will not," said Anne. "I wish you would have them."

"No, no," said Uncle Benjy, rushing off to escape their shine. But he had got no further than the passage when he returned again.

"And you won't lend 'em to anybody; or put them into the bank; for no bank is safe in these troublous times?... If I was you, I'd keep 'em exactly as they be; & not spend 'em on any account. Shall I lock them into my box for ye?"

"Certainly," said she; & the farmer rapidly unlocked the under-bench, opened the box & locked them in. "'Tis much the best plan, he said with great satisfaction, as he returned the keys to his pocket. "There they will always be safe, you see, & you won't be exposed to temptation."

When the old man had been gone a few minutes the miller & his wife came in. Anne's anxiety about Bob was again quite uncontrollable, but not entirely of old nature, for what he had left. She would fain have inquired now, & she asked them anxiously if they knew where Bob was, but to inform them of the rupture. She was forced to admit that she had somewhat tried his patience, & that impulsive men had been known to do dark things with themselves at such times.

They sat down to supper, the clock ticked rapidly on, & at length the miller said, "Bob is later than usual: where can he be?"

As they both looked at her she could no longer keep the secret. "It is my fault!" she cried. "I have driven him away. What shall I do!"

The nature of the quarrel was at once guessed, & her two elders said no more. Anne rose, & went to the front door, where she listened for every sound with a palpitating heart. Then she went in: then she went out: & on one occasion she heard the miller say "I wonder what hath passed between Bob & Anne. I hope the chap will come home.

Just about this time light footsteps were heard without, & Bob bounced into the passage. Anne, who had stood back in the dark while he passed, followed him into the room, where her mother & the miller were on the point of retiring to bed, candle in hand.

"I have kept ye up, I fear," began Bob, without the slightest shade of tragedy in his face or tone. "But the truth out is, I met with Tess Derriman at the Duke of York as I went from here, & there we have been playing Put ever since, not noticing how the time was going. I have had a good chat with the fellow for years & years; & really he is an out & out good comrade – a regular hearty! Poor fellow, he's been very badly used. I never heard the rights of the story till now; but it seems that old imp of his treats him shamefully. He has been hiding away his money so that poor Tess might not have a farthing; till at last the young man has turned, like any other worm, & is now determined to ferret out what he has done with it. The poor chap had'nt a farthing of ready money till I lent him a couple of guineas – a thing I never did more willingly in my life. But the man was very honorable. 'No, no', says he; 'don't let me deprive ye.' He's going to marry; & what may you think he is going to do it for?"

"For love, I hope?" said Anne's mother.

"For money, I suppose, since he's so short," said the miller.

"No," said Bob. "For spite. He has been badly served – deuced badly served – by a woman. I never heard of a more heartless case in my life. The poor chap would'nt mention names, but it seems she has trifled with him in all manner of cruel ways – pushed him into the river – tried

to steal his horse when he was called out to defend his country — in short seemed this rascally. So I gave him the two guineas & said 'Now let's drink to the hussy's downfall!'

"Oh!" said Anne blankly, having approached behind him.

Bob turned & saw her; & at the same moment Mr & Mrs Loveday discreetly retired by the other door. "Is it peace?" he asked tenderly.

"O yes" she answered, replied. "I — didn't mean to make you think I had no heart." At this Bob inclined his countenance towards hers. "No," she said, smiling through two incipient tears as she drew back. "You are to show good behaviour for six months, & you must promise not to frighten me again by running off when I — show you how badly you have served me.

"I am yours obedient — in anything! cried Bob. "But I am pardoned?

"A too easy pardon is apt to make folk repeat the fault." [Do you repent?" [It wd be superfluous to reassure Bob on this point.]

[Bob's lips were heard without. "O begad — I forgot!" said Bob. "He's waiting out there for a light."

"Who?"

"My friend Derriman"

"But Bob — I have to explain —"

But Hestius had by this time entered the lobby; & Anne, with a hasty "Get rid of him at once!" vanished upstairs.

Here she waited & waited, but Hestius did not seem inclined to depart; & at last, foreboding some collision of interests from Bob's new friendship for this man, she crept into a store-room, which was over the apartment into which Loveday & Hestius had gone. By looking through a knot-hole in the floor it was easy to command a view of the room beneath, this being unealed with moulded beams & rafters.

Hestius had sat down on the hollow window-bench, & was continuing the statement of his wrongs. If he only knew what he was sitting upon, she thought, with apprehension, how easily he could tear up the flap, lock & all, with his strong arm, & seize upon poor

Uncle Benjy's possessions. But he did not appear to know, unless he were acting, which was just possible. after a while he rose, & going to the table lifted the candle to light his pipe. At the moment when the flame began diving into the bowl the door noiselessly opened & a figure slipped across the room to the window-bench, hastily unlocked it, withdrew the box, & beat a retreat. Anne in a moment recognised the ghostly intruder as Festus Derriman's uncle. Before he could get out of the room Festus set down the candle & turned.

"What — uncle Benjy — haw, haw! Here at this time of night?"

Uncle Benjy's eyes green & fixed, & his mouth opened & shut like a frog's in a drought, the action producing no sound.

"What have we got here — a tin box — the box of boxes? Why, I'll carry it for ye, uncle! I am going home."

"N-no-no, thanky, Festy: it is n-n-not heavy at all, thanky," gasped the old squireen.

"Oh but I must," said Festus pulling at the box. [illegible]

"Don't let him have it Bob!" screamed the affrighted Anne through the hole in the floor. "No, don't let him," cried the uncle. "'Tis a plot — there's a woman at the window waiting to help him!" [Anne's eyes flew to the window, & she saw Matilda's face pressed against the pane.

Bob, though he did not know whence Anne's command proceeded, obeyed with alacrity, pulled the box from the two relatives, & placed it on the table beside him. "Now look here, hearties; what's the meaning o' this?" he said.

"He's trying to rob me of all I possess!" cried the old man. "My heart-strings seem as if they were going to crack, crack, crack!"

At this instant the butler in his shirt sleeves entered the room, having got thus far in his undressing when he heard the noise. Bob & Festus turned to him to explain; & when the latter had had his say Bob added, "Well all I know is that this box —" Here he stretched out his hand to lay it upon the lid for emphasis. But as nothing but thin air met his fingers where the box had been he turned, & found that the box was gone, Uncle Benjy having vanished also.

Festus with an imprecation hastened to the door, but though the night was not dark Farmer Derriman & his burden were nowhere to be seen. On the bridge Festus joined a shadowy female form, & they went along the road together, followed

for some distance by Bob, lest they should meet with & harm the old man. But the precaution was unnecessary: nowhere on the road was there any sign of Farmer Derriman, or of the box that belonged to him. When Bob re-entered the house Anne & Mrs Loveday had joined the miller downstairs, & then for the first time he learnt who had been the heroine of Hester's lamentable story, with many other particulars of that yeoman's history which he had never before known. Bob swore that he would not speak to the traitor again, & the family retired.

The escape of old Mr Derriman from the annoyances of his nephew not only held good for that night, but for next day, & for ever. Just after dawn on the following morning a labouring man who was going to his work saw the old farmer & landowner leaning over a rail in a mead near his house, apparently engaged in contemplating the water of a brook before him. Drawing near the man spoke, but Uncle Benjy did not reply. His head was hanging strangely, his body being supported in its erect position entirely by the rail that passed under each arm. On after examination it was found that Uncle Benjy's poor withered heart had cracked & stopped its beating, by release from damages inflicted on it by the excitements of his life, & of the previous night in particular. The unconscious carcase was little more than a light empty husk, dry & fleshless as that of a dead heron found on a moor in January.

But the tin box was not discovered with or near him. It was searched for all the week, & all the month. The mill-pond was dragged, quarries were examined searched, woods were threaded, rewards were offered; but in vain. At length one day in the spring, when the ~~miller~~ mill-horse was about to be cleaned throughout, the chimney-board of Anne's bed room, concealing a yawning fireplace, had to be taken down. In the chasm behind it stood the missing deed-box of Farmer Derriman.

Many were the conjectures as to how it had got there. Then Anne remembered that on going to bed the night after the collision between Hester & this uncle in the room below, she had seen mud on the carpet of her room,

& the miller remembered that he had seen foot-prints on the back stairs. The solution of the mystery seemed to be that the late Uncle Benjy, instead of running off from the house with his box, had doubled on getting out of the front door, entered at the back, deposited his box in Anne's chamber where it was found, & then leisurely pursued his way home at the heels of Hesters, intending to tell Anne of his trick the next day — an intention that was forever frustrated by the stroke of death.

Mr Berkmans solicitor was a Weymouth man; & Anne placed the box in his hands. Uncle Benjy's will was discovered within; & by this testament ~~[illegible]~~ Anne's queer old friend appointed her sole executrix of his said will, & more than that, gave & bequeathed to the same young lady all his real & personal estate, with the solitary exception of five small freehold houses in a back street in Weymouth, which were devised to his nephew Hesters as a sufficient property to maintain him decently, without affording any margin for extravagancies. Overcome Hall, with its mud quadrangle, archways, mullioned windows, cracked battlements, & weed-grown garden, passed with the rest into the hands of Anne.

Chapter XLI

Farewell.

During this exciting time John Loveday seldom or never appeared at the mill. With the recall of Bob in which he had been sole agent, his mission seemed to be complete.

One midday before Anne had made any change in her manner of living on account of her unexpected acquisitions, Lieutenant Bob came in rather suddenly. He had been to Weymouth; & announced to the assembled family that the — th Dragoons were ordered to join Sir Arthur Wellesley in the Peninsula. [These tidings produced a great impression in the household. John had been so long in the neighbourhood, either at camps or in barracks, that they had almost forgotten the possibility of his being sent away; & they now began to —

reflect upon the singular infrequency of his calls since his brother's return. There was not much time, however, for reflection, if they wished to make the most of John's farewell visit, which was to be paid the same evening, the departure of the regiment being fixed for next day. A hurried valedictory supper was prepared during the afternoon, & shortly afterwards John arrived.

He seemed to be more thoughtful & a trifle paler than of old, but beyond these traces, which might have been due to the natural wear & tear of time, he showed no signs of gloom. On his way hither through the town that morning a curious little incident had occurred to him. He was walking past one of the Weymouth churches when a wedding-party came forth, the bride & bridegroom being Matilda & Festus Derriman. At sight of the trumpet-major the yeoman had glared triumphantly; but Matilda on her part had slily winked at him as much as to say — But what she meant Heaven knows: the trumpet-major did not trouble himself to think, & passed on without returning the mark of confidence with which she had favoured him.

Soon after John arrived at the mill several of his friends dropped in for the same purpose of bidding adieu. They were mostly the men who had been entertained there on the occasion of the regiment's advent on the down, when Anne & her mother were coaxed in to grace the party by their superior presence; & their well-trained, gallant manners were such as to make them interesting visitors now as at all times. For it was a period when romance had not so greatly faded out of military life as it has done in these days of short service, heterogeneous mixing, & transient campaigns — when the esprit de corps was strong, & long experience stamped notably professional characteristics even on commonplace rank & file; while the militia visitors had the additional advantage of being picked men.

They could not stay so long to-night as on that earlier & more cheerful occasion, & the final adieus were spoken at an early hour. It was no mere playing at departure, as when they had gone to Exeter barracks, & there was a real & prolonged shaking of hands all round.

"You'll wish the poor fellows good-bye?" said Bob to Anne, who had not come forward for that purpose like the rest.

~~"They have only come to see Mr Loveday & my mother," she objected.~~

~~"But~~ "They are going away, & would like to have your good word."

She then shyly advanced; & every man felt that he must make some pretty speech as he shook her by the hand.

"Good-bye! May you remember us as long as it makes ye happy, & forget us as soon as it makes ye sad," said sergeant-master-tailor Brett.

"Good-night! Health, wealth, & long life to ye!" said Sergeant-major Wills taking her hand from Brett.

"I trust to meet ye again as the wife of a worthy man!" said Trumpeter Buck

We'll drink your health throughout the campaign; & so good-bye t'ye!" said saddler-sergeant Jones, raising her hand to his lips.

Three Others followed with similar remarks, to each of which Anne blushingly replied as well as she could, wishing them a prosperous voyage, easy conquest, & a speedy return. But alas for that: Of the seven ~~men~~ upon whom these wishes were bestowed four were dead men within the nine following years, & their bones left to moulder in the land of their ~~exile~~ campaigns. ~~for ever in a foreign land.~~

John lingered behind. When the others were outside expressly a final farewell to his father, Mr Loveday, ~~Bob, at last~~ he came to Anne, who remained within. ~~stood apart.~~

"But ~~you said~~ I thought you were going to look in again before leaving?" she said.

No – I find I cannot. Good-bye!

John, said Anne, holding his right hand in both hers: "I must tell you something. You were wise in not taking me at my word that day. I was greatly mistaken about myself: gratitude is not love – though I wanted to make it so for the time. You don't call me thoughtless for what I did?

My dear Anne, cried John with more gaiety than truthfulness, don't let yourself be troubled. What happens is for the best. Soldiers love here to-day & there to-morrow. Who knows that you won't hear of my attentions to some Spanish maid before a month is gone by? 'Tis the way of us, you

know – a soldier's heart is not worth a week's purchase – ha-ha! Good bye – good bye!

Anne felt the expediency of his manner, took the affectation as real, & smiled her reply. Then he went out of the door, where he ~~parted from~~ bade adieu to the miller, Mrs Loveday, & Bob, who said at parting: It's all right Jack, my dear fellow. After a courting that would have been enough to win three ordinary English women, five French, & ~~some Italians~~ ten mulottiers she has to-day consented to bestow her hand upon me at the end of six months.... Good bye, Jack – good-bye!

The candle held by his father shed its waving light upon John's face & uniform as he turned with a parade smile on the door-stone, backed by the black night; & in another moment he had plunged into the darkness, the ring of his smart step dying away upon the bridge as he joined his waiting companions in arms, & went off to blow his trumpet over the bloody battle fields of Spain.

The End.